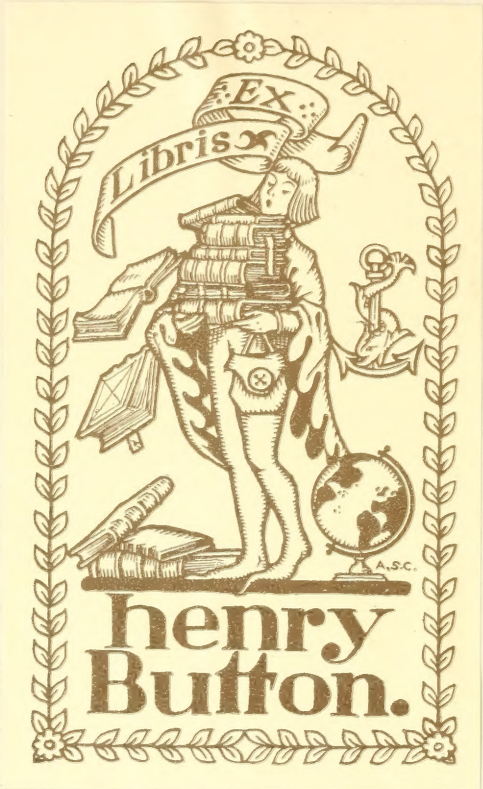
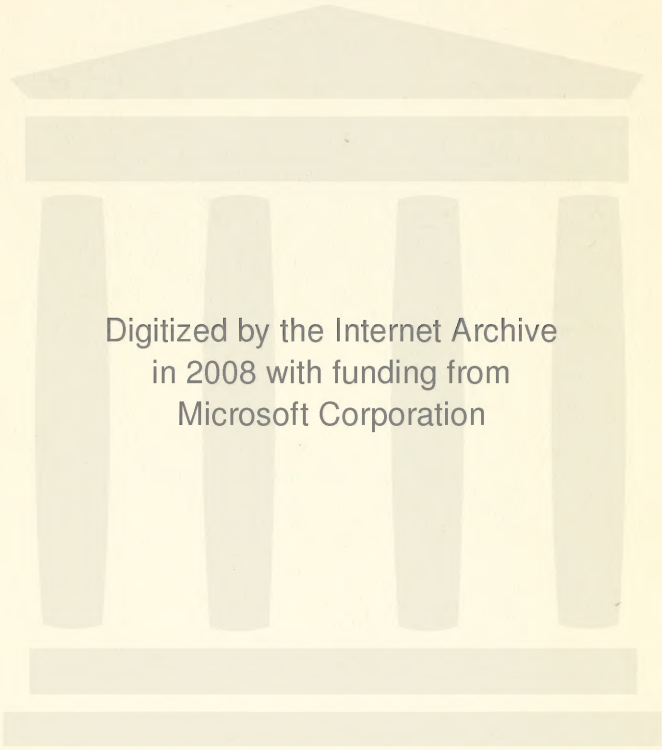
SOUTH OF SUEZ

BY

WILLIAM ASHLEY ANDERSON

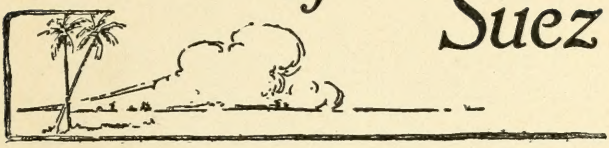

Ex
Libris
A.S.C.
henry
Button.



South of Suez

A *Shum* or Petty Chieftain of the Shoan Stock, With Headdress of Tufts of Lions' Tails, Garments of Velvet and Silk, Shield Studded With Gold and a High-Powered Rifle.

South of Suez



by

William Ashley Anderson

Illustrated

New York
Robert M. McBride & Co.
1920

Published August, 1920

To those absent and distant friends with whom I may never walk again, but in whose memory I live and who will always live in mine . . . to them who have unconsciously proven to me that there is something more in life than all its grim reality, who have taught me that in the stinking slime of the village pool is where the lotus blooms, and with whom I have learned that the best of life is in dreams and the memory of dreams, though dreams never mastered them and illusions never lured them from the safe humorous cynicism that knows the most magnificent roar of the lion is, after all, a glorious and satisfying belch!

May they always find water by the baobab, and gin for the mahdafu. . . .

Jambo!

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

A Coin Is Spun

MOROSE and rebellious, victims more of a mood of depression than of any tangible menace, we stepped out of the gloom of a grey fog into the dry, smoke-filled atmosphere of a low-ceilinged room where tables were littered about, and surly, red-faced men argued in rising and falling cadence over matters of great moment to the world but of little moment to them.

A querulous voice insisted:

"All I says is, keep their hands offer us! Europe's none of our business; and we don't want none of theirs!" . . .

Another more sensible voice bawled with indignant and reiterated determination:

"A lil' piece-a cheese, Sharley! . . . A lil' piece-a cheese, Sharley! . . . I wanta piece-a cheese, Sharley! . . . *And* some mustard!" . . .

The cash register behind the bar was musically tolling its chimes; a rattle of knives and forks and roughly handled dishes gave a clue to the

door of the adjoining restaurant; and from a breezily decorated room in back came the disturbing syncopations of a small stringed band. We went thither; found a table in the corner; and ordered seidels of Pilsener and a small tureen of Long Island Golden Buck.

When we had eaten, and the long, cool beer had somewhat soothed us, we turned in our chairs and watched the few dancers with cynical attention. The music was good, the dancing was pleasant to watch, and the place was respectable. But its name was *Germania Hall;* and we had both just failed to have our services accepted in Belgium. . . .

New York was smothering us.

The throngs of restless, useless men in the streets exasperated us; the futile gatherings by the bulletin boards amused and then enraged us; the unimportance of our own work in a world that was more and more insisting on primitive action worked upon our spirits with a depressing effect, and we felt a growing and irresistible determination to get out and do something—do we cared not what; go we cared not whither. Accustomed to wide places, we wanted again to stretch our arms and test our strength with prob-

lems that were not inextricably intertwined with commuters' trains and daily schedules.

I drew a coin from my pocket and looked at my companion. He caught my meaning instantly. His face brightened and he grinned.

"All right," he said. "Heads, it's South America."

"Tails, it's Africa," I added, and spun the coin. . . .

Two weeks later we sailed for Africa.

In these sketches of some of the incidents that have filled the years since then there are gaps, there are wilful omissions (especially of war events; for of that we weary), there is no real continuity in my grouping, because fate has scattered my cards like a marked deck flung in the face of a gambler. Only you who know can read in them other tales by observing closely the little points that mark the cards. And now that it is over, there surges up the same unrest, because the world, we know who know the far places, is not at peace, and uncertainty still stirs vaguely within.

The cogitations of the men at Versailles are forced to embrace Mkwa, the Massai warrior, dead chieftain of the same folk from whom

my bee-hunting *kilongozi* quailed when we debouched from the dark forest. Suddenly in the same capital there appear Abyssinian *rases,* men whom I saw in mediæval warfare to preserve their ancient empire, now offering it as a vassal state of France. At my elbow there is a little machine through which blithely sounds the voice of my chum, whom I had more than once thought of burying under the palms of Dar-es-Salaam. The chapters have ended pleasantly; but there are letters in my mail from Madagascar, China, and Singapore. And there are rising doubts in my mind.

"I am of this mind with Homer," said Lyly, "that as the snaile that crept out of her shel was turned eftsoones into a toad, and thereby was forced to make a stoole to sit on; so the traveller that stragleth from his owne country is in a short time transformed into so monstrous a shape, that he is faine to alter his mansion with his manners, and to live where he can, not where he would."

In that, old friends of mine, there is a melancholy truth. But though we can never gather by one single hearth, the wind of reminiscence will blow us to many reunions. And memory may outlive matter!

Soldiers, Sand, and Sentiment

AS we came up from tiffin, there, lying flat as an adder in the sun, mottled with bleached colour, was Port Said, on its spit of Egyptian sand. A fishing-fleet of feluccas clung to the edge of the shallow beach like crumbs upon a withered lip, and the mouth of the canal was choked with shipping.

There was hardly any of the old-time chatter of enthusiasm. Most of us had seen it all before. An officer, who had cultivated the habit of rubbing his left arm briskly by way of economical massage, smiled wryly, and said:

"Well, vacation's over. Here we are back at the old shop with lots of unfinished business."

That was the general attitude.

The decks were crowded with convalescent officers, young and old, all men who had been in heavy action—at Ypres, at Loos, at Hulluch, at Suvla Bay, in the North Sea, and in the Ægean. As for the others, they also served—pink-faced boys with new, faultless tropical

gear, on their way out as substitutes to Basra in the Gulf, or to bury themselves in remote posts of the Soudan; a few frightened Egyptian officials, happy enough at getting home, yet doubtful of what awaited them; some blasé Frenchmen; a governor or two of unmapped districts in the Far East; well-curried traders, too old for the trenches, but more than fit to keep England's chests filled with gold; some unobtrusive children; and a number of sweet-faced English wives, shining examples, with smiling faces and gentle hands, sharing their large part of the Empire's burden. So there they all were together, a boat-load of them, bruised sinews of a world empire; and there before them was that strange anomaly, Port Said, a vampire sucking up the blood of men, and a horn of plenty pouring forth the wealth of the Orient.

We rounded the breakwater, and the great P. & O. liner, with a bellow of palpable relief at having passed the hazards of the Mediterranean, slid self-consciously past the irregular row of cynical, lumpy, bulbous French cruisers —which, with those ubiquitous French ensigns, long lines of drying clothes, flying between the masts, and anchor-eyes oozing rust, plainly in-

dicated that they, also, had been flirting with death on the high seas—and came to anchor close to the customs jetty along the Bund.

The tender slipped alongside to put the agent aboard; the small harbour craft poked in and out, while their dusky scullers waved their red fezzes and screamed for passengers; the winches roared and struggled with the freight; the great coal-hulks, alive with grimy black men chewing hunks of dry bread and spitting out verbal filth, fastened themselves to the towering vessel like unclean monsters—and the agony was on.

"Phew!" said the Australian major, wiping the soot from his eyes, "this is rotten. I'm not going to stick it much longer." Which struck me as rather remarkable, coming from a man who had survived five months in the trenches of Anzac before being mauled about by a Turkish shell—especially as he had only one useful leg to hobble away on.

On my other hand was a Scotch skipper, bound for Singapore as a passenger—a very remarkable man even in normal times; one who had ploughed his dogged way through the channels of every sea, gathering experiences as a ship gathers barnacles. He had crashed through

Formosan junks, weathered typhoons and blizzards, raced with hostile submarines, and, I have reason to believe, was even on hand to aid in salvaging the *Audacious*—if salvaged she was. Short, powerful, imperturbable as to face, nimble as to wit, he had a great heart and fearless lips. Cocking a waggish eye at me, he removed the pipe from his mouth and nodded toward shore. I deprecated the suggestion.

"Only to send a cable," said I, "and to buy a new topi."

"Oh, ay," said the skipper. "They never go for more."

"What," said the major, "and aren't you going ashore?"

"Now look ye here," demanded the skipper, scornfully, "do I look like such a fool? What's there to see, ay? A bloomin' lot o' niggars and greasy Egyptians. Ye go up to the hotel and have a cup o' black coffee, and grin wi' delight, and pay one-and-sixpence for it. And maybe ye see some sodgers loafin' about the streets, and maybe ye don't. Or else ye go up to Simon Arts and buy some curios for the wee uns at home. If ye stop aboard they'll all come back, fast enough, sick of it, wi' their bellies full. . . ."

"And how about 'Madame Binat and a Zanzibar dance of the finest'?" I suggested.

He wheeled about and studied me for a moment under half-closed eyelids.

"Oh, ay," he said, grinning broadly. "So that's it. But ye'll find no more o' that. These are war-times. It's not the old place, ye know."

This was true. The place was no longer as it had been in the old days of home-going Colonials and tourists who measured each new thrill with their purse-strings. Where were the boats with the Levantine girls—doe-eyed girls with only the faintest hard lines about their lips, strumming mandolins and guitars, and trying desperately, with their thin, spiritless voices, to lend a note of gaiety to "Funicula," despite the clattering roar of winches and the howling of the grimy coal-*wallahs?* Where were the grinning Arab and Somali boys, mocking the singers with burlesque chatter as they gambolled in the muddied water, diving for coins as cormorants dive for fish? And where was the sleek, salacious presence at the elbow, unobtrusive though ubiquitous, breathing in oily accents: *"Salamat.* Sir, you want to see naughty peektures? Look, sir—French peektures. One bob"? Gone!

Faded away into the unhealthy, mythical past of peace and prosperity.

Nevertheless, feeling supremely self-conscious, I slipped away from the skipper's accusing glance and sought the Girl from Keppel Harbor to see if there were any commissions I could perform ashore. Then I joined the mixed crowd that eddied about the gangway and flowed in an unbroken procession of skiffs toward the customs jetty, where several Egyptian officials were examining passports and inspecting the landing passengers. As I went over the side, the skipper shook his pipe at me and called:

"No funny business, now. Ye mind the notice in the smoking-room?"

But I went blithely ashore, sniffing reminiscently the commingled stinks that are the perfume of the Orient. And here I was plucked out of the merry line by a little slip of an Egyptian official, clad in the raiment of a New York Benjamin, plus a red fez. As his eye fell upon my passport, he looked plainly startled.

"You are *Americain?*"

"Certainly. You see my passport."

"Sorree. You cannot land."

He handed back the passport, readjusted his fez nervously, and turned to the next applicant with such an air of finality that for a moment I stood there uncertainly. Then I took him by the elbow. I told him, gently, that it would be necessary for me to see some one of higher authority.

In the course of the next three minutes I passed through the hands of two more startled officials and two indignant harbour policemen, whom I wilfully mistook for local guides; but in the end I only succeeded in landing myself in front of a counter in the passport bureau, beside the barrier. Several sweating, vociferous, bespectacled Egyptians, behind the counter, were waving papers and shouting incoherently at a dazed, shuffling mob, shaken, like vermin, from the very tail of Asia. My case was settled rapidly.

"Impossible," said the chief.

"Damn it! . . ." I exploded.

"No matter," said he, "it's impossible."

At this moment a trim little Frenchwoman, bareheaded and dressed in a neat black skirt, slipped up to me, scribbled on a piece of paper, and thrust it into my hand.

"Passez," said she.

I was astonished. "Thank you," I said politely.

"Passez," she repeated coldly, and looked at me with hard eyes. I examined the paper. It was a permit to return to the vessel. They would not let me land at all, and apparently they would not let me depart without special permission. I elbowed my way back furiously to the counter; but a British army officer spied me and, working his way quickly through the crowd before I could say anything, laid a friendly hand on my arm.

"I'm afraid it's no use," he said. "You see, the whole blessed place is a war zone now. You're practically in the trenches; and they're awf'ly particular. Good Lord! I'm having trouble myself, and if they won't let an army man through, it doesn't seem likely they'll let a stranger pass, does it?"

He was hardly more than a boy; but he was a captain, and I saw he belonged to a regiment that had fought hard in Gallipoli. It suddenly occurred to me that I was making an ass of myself, and a general nuisance to people engaged on a mighty serious business—a nation strug-

gling to keep its head literally above water. I turned away from the counter.

"I suppose you're right," I admitted.

"It's hard lines," he said.

"Not at all. I should have understood. I've no right to bother your people here just for the sake of a cup of black coffee."

We both laughed. He was a nice chap, with a friendly smile and candid eyes, and I should have liked to make his better acquaintance. It must have dawned on both of us at the same time how bitter, in a way, are these war-time meetings; for suddenly we shook hands. He was on his way to his death, for all I knew; and for all he knew, I was drifting merrily and carelessly about the world.

"Good luck," I said.

"Thank you."

And he disappeared in the crowd, and I went slowly back to the jetty. However, I wandered aside from the landing-stage, and was about to accept the services of a ravenous crowd of unlicensed boatmen who came over the edge of the wharf and swarmed at me like Gulf pirates over the edge of a dhow, when the two harbour policemen converged upon me, gesticulating

violently and shouting all manner of Egyptian slang. It was plain I had wandered away from the official landing-stage and was being ordered back into line. It is not exactly pleasant for an old resident of the East to be ordered about by a native policeman; and then it suddenly occurred to me that here was an opportunity with a bit of strategy to get past the barrier, after all, for the *choki* was in the heart of the town. So I remained where I was, and used language that would have convulsed a camel-driver; but it was useless provocation.

They regarded me, for a moment, with darkening faces, uncertain what to do. Then they conferred under their breath, shrugged their shoulders simultaneously, and walked deliberately away. There remained nothing for me to do but to clamber into a bumboat. In a few minutes I was aboard once more. As I crossed the ship's deck, there was the skipper, feet wide apart, head tilted back, eyeing me severely under lowered lids.

"Ye blitherin' fool," said he, "did I not tell ye to stop yer funny business?"

I laughed at him.

So he took me by the arm and guided me to

the smoking-room, where a notice was posted pertaining to passports. And I read thereon that any one endeavouring to pass the barrier by any irregularity or subterfuge whatsoever would be subjected to the complete operations of martial law.

I made my way soberly to the other end of the boat, to a shady spot under the bridge, where I found the Girl from Keppel Harbor reading a book of Bartimeus's yarns, and sought to divert myself with her naïve wit. She was in a blithe mood, and we chatted merrily; but, before I was quite aware of it, she was giving me a horrifying personal account of the Singapore mutiny. And then I realised definitely that war was a complete obsession.

Ambition was dead; Adventure was dead; Romance was dead. An inkling of this had been borne in on me in London—black, asthmatic London, where only hectic men and crippled men were left in peace, if peace there be in gloomy reflections and gloomier prospects. All delicate and fine emotions had been absorbed in the dull pain. Fathers no longer thought proudly of their sons' futures; subalterns did not dream of becoming great generals; sweethearts

had no plans for the happy return of their loved ones; no one considered his own future or his own desires. It had suddenly been borne in upon them that life is entirely too transitory and uncertain. There was no spontaneous, heartfelt merriment; there was no true wit. Whether consciously or unconsciously, all light amusements were carried on abstractedly, like the gaiety of the comedian who knows there is a tragedy behind the painted scenery.

It was not depression; it was simply that the individual consciousness was sunk in the national. No matter how these people may scorn the philosophy, they had adopted the philosophy of the Germans. A dead man, a shattered man, a pitiful woman—it was nothing, so long as the nation stood firm. *"C'est la guerre,"* said the armless Frenchman at Marseilles, shrugging his shoulders. "Oh, yes, it'll be all right again," said the Australian major, swaying on his crutches. "I'll be back in the trenches in two months." Most of them were out here to fight the Turks, or the Bulgars, or the Greeks; but principally the Sick Man of Europe.

That night, as I gazed into the star-sprinkled darkness of the desert across the salt-works in

By the Edge of the Canal, Excavating the Continually Seeping Sands of the Desert.

Looking Into the Crater, Old Aden, From Above the Tanks Built During a Civilization of Which Nothing Is Known.

the direction of Jaffa, I remembered it was here that "the sick man took up his bed and walked." And I also remembered that where the salt-heaps gleamed white in the gloom, like the tents of a vast, ghostly army, a young Macedonian named Alexander had once marched. Then I thought of that empire upon whose dominions the sun never sets; and of the Frenchman, De Lesseps; and the Canal, the weakest link in the Empire; and I dreamed that an answer was ready to the ancient query: What happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable body?

The ship did not move till daylight. There was much to be done. The bunkers were crammed with coal; cargo was discharged; the naval gun was lifted from the stern; fresh vegetables were taken aboard for barren Aden, cut off from the mainland by the Turks; and the pilot-house was banked with sandbags.

As the white sun rose out of Asia, I stepped out of my cabin in kimono and sandals and looked across the first sweep of Arabian desert. We had already left Port Said behind us and were well on our way through the big trench.

At first there was nothing at all remarkable

in the scene; I might have been on the platform of an observation-car that had just cleared the Lucian Cut-off and was sweeping through western Utah. It was flatter, though, with undulations that merged into one another so cunningly that armies could march across the plain without being observed; and a horseman, riding straight away from the Canal, would be lost behind the hummocks as you watched him. So it is not remarkable that, as I gazed across the dead salt desert, where nothing apparently could live, I only became aware by degrees that vague objects moved and vanished in the distance; but gradually the shapes took form, and I found that the sands were full of little groups of horsemen, camelmen, infantrymen, in patrols and outposts, like the little lead soldiers we played with as children. And along the very edge of the Canal were motionless sentinels, standing or squatting under mat shelters to protect them from the blaze of the tropical sun. The desert had a hundred thousand eyes and a million stings.

The early risers began to come on deck, to go through their Swedish drill, to stretch their bruised muscles, to gaze again upon familiar scenes.

"We'll be at Kantarah soon," said a young, grey-eyed officer of the Indian Marine.

I looked forward. The Canal wound gracefully away to the southward, fringed on the Egyptian side by a refreshing growth of green palms and drab acacias, broken at long intervals by tiny bungalows, where employés of the Canal Company kept eternal watch over the company's interests, much as the armed sentries across the way stood guard for the Empire. On the Arabian side was nothing but the billowing sand, crowding itself to the very water's edge and seeping into the channel itself, despite the revetments of stone brought in ballast from far countries to hold the tiny particles in check, despite the great dredges that prowl up and down, sucking at the invading streams like monstrous anteaters facing a migratory tide of insects.

"Kantarah?"

"Yes. There it is now." His face became animated. Leaning far forward, he fixed his gaze on the approaching spot; and there, sure enough, was Kantarah, the point nearest Port Said where the Turks had attempted to cross.

"How far did they get?" I asked.

"Not far." He grinned. "I was in charge

of a couple of armed tugs. We kept running up and down from here to Ishmailieh, banging away in the dark."

"But they reached the Canal?"

"Oh, yes. They launched some pontoons—two. There's one now. The other's down at Ishmailieh."

There, just swinging into the Kantarah bank at the end of a cable, for all the world like a Chinese ferry on the Grand Canal, loaded with Indian troops, horses, and fodder, was a barge-like iron pontoon. I recognised its German origin; for I had seen such before. But this was the first vessel I had ever known to cross a desert that tries the stamina of Bedouins and the endurance of dromedaries. It was not the last. There was another at Ishmailieh. And at Port Tewfik there was a long row of them, punctured by shrapnel and bullets, filled with sand, and used as a causeway.

It was in my heart to feel sympathy for the wasted efforts of these surprising Turks. It will be a long while before we understand the organisation of the army that crossed the desert, dragging pontoons and heavy guns, effecting simultaneous attacks at three main points on a

front extending a hundred miles along a barren shore, with a salt desert as a base; and persisting in the attacks to the point of launching several pontoons—six of which, probably, could have supported a bridge and afforded sufficient accommodation for a strong advance-guard. There was one thing, however, that aroused equal admiration; it was the appalling neatness with which the attack was smashed. It was as though three serpents, having crawled across the desert, reared their heads simultaneously, only to have them completely crushed by several very large and very determined hobnailed boots.

It was all explained to me in detail, but I cannot explain it to you.

Nevertheless, I should like to have picked Kantarah camp up bodily and deposited it somewhere near Plattsburg. It was a delight; perfect, so far as I could see, in every detail, from the adobe buildings that held headquarters to the camel patrols, drifting in a mist of sand along the eastern rim of the desert. Trenches, sentinels, outposts; battalions of infantry wheeling about on the floor of the desert; signalmen wig-wagging in squads like white and scarlet poppies tossed about by the winds; camel corps

and cavalry squadrons; field-guns and heavier artillery behind the low hills on the Egyptian side of the moat-like Canal. All were there, all in their correct proportions, and each peculiarly fit for this particular brand of warfare.

From Kantarah to the powerfully fortified camp at Ishmailieh the vessel passed literally between two lines of trenches. It was a pretty object-lesson to a man interested in defence against invasion, a veritable cinema film, every foot of which added an instructive picture. But vastly more interesting was the delight of the Indian army officers on board at the sight of familiar regiments—naked Brahmins squatting at the water's edge, washing their heads and rinsing their mouths, while in their midst stood some berry-brown English officer, sleeves rolled up, shirt collar opened clear down to his chest, "shorts" permitting a generous expanse of weathered knee and calf, topi tilted back with all the cockiness of an opera-hat, and a light stick under his arm; Bikanirs swaying past on the towering camels of India, haughtily indifferent to the passing liner, or casting incurious glances at the railings thronged with eager faces; lancers from Bengal trotting by in patrols, on

graceful horses, daintily lifting their hoofs high in the heavy sand; an outpost of bewhiskered Punjaubis, leaning on their rifles and grinning with sheer delight.

There was uproar in some of the native camps —camps of clustering mat huts with fires of twigs in the open places, sending aloft wisps of smoke like long, thin feathers; camps that might have been villages on the Indus or Irrawady, except for the almost startling absence of women, babies, bullocks, and gaunt pariahs; and having behind them, instead of green jungle, broad fields of barbed wire, ripe for the cutting if a reaper could be found. There was uproar, the natives streaming from their huts, lining up along the bank at sight of the great mail-boat sweeping past them on the road to Inde, and shouting and cheering, while the *sahibs* and *memsahibs* on board, forgetting all distinctions in the confraternity of empire, shouted and cheered back.

"Jove!" said a flustered colonel, mopping his flushed face, as a new group came sliding alongside, "I didn't know they were here." Then, unable to contain himself, he leaned far over the railing, waving his topi, and bellowing:

"What regiment? What regiment? Courtney *Sahib,* hai? Courtney *Sahib!* Oh, Courtney! Courtney!"

There was a break in the black line of shouting natives, and a silent, thin, self-contained officer was disclosed, wearing his bleached and abbreviated khaki with the careless ease of an old-timer. Instead of a topi he wore a turban, which was a bit of unconscious "swank," as the "subs" say. Twenty of his men looked at him and shouted, pointing upward at the ship sweeping past. The officer scanned the passengers with quizzical pleasure; but when, at length, his gaze lighted on the hoarse, furiously gesticulating colonel, the sight electrified him. He threw up both arms in greeting, and ran up to his knees into the water.

"Oh, it's you!" he shouted, joyfully. "Where to?"

"Peshawur. Is Meadows with you?"

"Yes. Back there in the sand. Where's old Strumleigh?" shrieked the officer, thinking he was not heard. "Strumleigh! Where's 'Billy Williams' Strumleigh?"

A gale of laughter swept the side of the ship, for 'Billy Williams' is a drink. By the time the

laughter had subsided, the boat had passed out of calling distance. The colonel looked dazedly at me, with a rather hopeless expression on his face.

"But 'Billy Williams' is dead," he protested, mildly. "He was killed in Serbia, you know."

I didn't know, but I thought I understood. I had a brief vision of three young subalterns twenty years ago, on *shikar* together in the Kashmiri hills. So I walked around to the other side, leaving the colonel murmuring inanely to himself, "By Jove! By Jove!"

I found the Girl from Keppel Harbor reclining in a long chair, for the moment oblivious to the panorama that was being reeled off under our very noses while she listened, with amiable abstraction, to the smiling remarks of an Irish subaltern, a broth of a lad, seated beside her on a camp-stool. You would not have thought, to look at the graceful, well-set length of him, and his laughing eyes and close-trimmed moustache, that his body had felt the bite of several bullets, his lungs had been torn with pneumonia, and his frost-bitten legs saved from the surgeon's scalpel and saw only at the risk of a mortifying body. To see his teeth flash and hear his low

laugh you never would have thought it. With vague reluctance I turned away, my attention diverted by new sights.

There were regiments of white troops linked along the Canal, many and many of them—British, Australians and New Zealanders. The Australians were Americans in looks and temperament. They sat on the bank on the Egyptian side, under the shade of a few sere palm-trees, shouting and bantering with the passengers, or plunging into the water in all their khaki kit for tins of cigarettes flung from the decks. I noticed one solitary figure under a shady bank, fishing with a long bamboo pole. Came a loud, clear drawl from a fellow-countryman on board:

"Pret-ty soft! Pret-ty soft!"

The bamboo pole was jerked up viciously. The fisherman glared at the boat.

"Pretty soft!" he roared. "Pretty soft, hey? Why don't you come down here? This is a hell of a life, this is. No fish; and I haven't seen a damned Turk in a month." And he placed the long pole at slope arms, climbed morosely up the bank, and disappeared behind a hillock.

And so the ship passed on, with the passengers shouting, cheering, calling messages, hardly

ever at a loss to make themselves understood—recognising old regiments, old friends, recalling memories of the hills, the plains, the clubs of Bombay, and the great colonies south of the line.

I came across an apprentice who was doing duty as fourth officer, in view of the shortage of men, standing unsupported on the five-inch railing, swaying his body this way and that, waving his arms together, right to left, or one at a time, in all the complications of semaphore signalling. On shore, a good eighth of a mile away, another figure was answering him. Thus they talked in silence, until the angle of the boat forbade any further communication. Then he leaped down from the railing with the expression of one who has completed an errand.

"Sending a message from my mother," he explained, grinning. "Have a brother back there with the gunners."

All day long this sort of thing continued, till it became commonplace, and the majority of the passengers wearily drowsed in their steamer-chairs—past Kantarah, past Ishmailieh, into the Bitter Lakes, where several North Sea trawlers went placidly about their business in the unfamiliar waters, hunting for mines; and a French

cruiser sat firmly on the mud—a steel citadel, frowning across the shimmering desert. . . .

When we left the lakes, the sun was declining rapidly. Now, if there's one thing more impressive than a desert sunrise, it's a desert sunset, as any guide will tell you at Shepheard's. So, almost unconsciously, in ones and twos, the passengers drifted over to the starboard side. Beyond the Bitter Lakes the Canal had widened out, and the ship slipped through the still waters with ever-increasing speed, and the outposts on shore thinned as the country became more desolate.

An outcropping of the Libyan hills rose on the western horizon, and the great, red Egyptian sun plunged behind it, as a light passes behind a Japanese screen, throwing out bars and wisps of shifting colour. Sunset is probably the only moment of daylight when our thoughts are focussed on supermundane things. Gazing in silent eye-worship at the heart of our constellation, we are strangely lifted out of ourselves, especially on the edge of a desert where there are no petty distractions to draw aside our irresponsible, childish attention; we are suddenly overcome with a suffocating sense of physical minute-

ness, and at the same time filled with a feeling of spiritual expansion. As a result we stand dumb, filled with intangible memories, vague longings, and a melancholy unrest. The shadows, the solid banks of gold and purple and saffron, a silver-edged feather of a cloud high in the broad sky, a brief silhouette of camels on the sky-line, their riders gazing upward—all these things interpret the solemn silence. And as we gazed, forgotten was war and all its misery; the tumult suddenly was still. And then it was dark. Still I did not move.

An arm was gently linked in mine. I glanced aside to see the skipper with his solemn face and waggish eyes.

"Ay," he nodded, knowingly. "But yonder's the lights of Sooez."

Twinkling on the horizon off our starboard bow were the lights of Suez, marking the end of the Canal.

"We'll soon be out in the open. Are ye goin' to be long in the East?" he added suddenly.

I nodded.

"Then," he said, taking the pipe from his mouth and shaking it under my chin, "ye'd better take yer eyes off the sky and come down and

fill yer belly wi' substantial food. Star-gazing will never get ye anything in this world."

Which I sorrowfully admitted to be a fact. So I joined him, and we went below. . . . But I caught a glimpse of the young Irish officer and the Girl from Keppel Harbor standing in the shadows far forward, watching the moon rise out of the desert; and I began to have my doubts.

Aden of Araby

LEANING over the rail of a Nord Deutscher Lloyd steamer, safe in harbour after having been battered across the Indian Ocean by the young and lusty monsoon, I listened to the German doctor who stood beside me pointing out the flat, narrow isthmus, across which caravans came bearing the fruits and spices of Araby. Aden bulked ruggedly at the end of the isthmus like a rock in the loop of a sling poised for some unseen foe.

"It's ugly," said the young doctor, reflectively, "and it's hot and dirty, but there are great possibilities . . ."

After a couple of years, when I again entered the shimmering harbour and looked across the scorching white reaches of the Arabian shore, the old Deutscher was lying on a coral bed lapped by the waves of the China Sea. I do not know where the doctor breathed; but this I know—there was nothing on the wide seas that sailed from Bremen, and the Yemen gave forth noth-

ing but bullets from Austrian Mausers and dust *djinns* that came snorting and shrieking from the Hadremaut. The world of men had changed; but the barren rocks remained the same—a vast St. Michael anchored in a tepid sea, its crusted slopes rotting and quivering with humid heat, while around its verge a multitude of men of many races toiled in defiance of sun and sand, some as sentinels of an empire, but the most in the whimsical hope of insuring a happy old age.

A mist of coal dust rose about the mail-steamer. Ports were closed; fans droned hopelessly in the stifling cabins; distraught passengers wandered helplessly about the deck, mopping their faces, or stood at the port rail with glasses screwed to their eyes, gazing at Sheikh Othman, where they hoped for a sight of the venturesome Turks who had intruded to the very threshold of Aden. A few tossed idle coins among the coal-coolies, not realising that these were Bedouins and Fuzzy-wuzzies, men of unconquered tribes. But none made a move to go ashore.

The Scotch skipper, bound for Singapore to take command of a tanker, was standing beside me, poking his pipe gently in my ribs to empha-

A Bit of the Aden Bazaar, With the *Choki,* or Jail, on the Left.

The Drying Water-hole, a Remarkable Impression of Thorn Bush and Animal Life—Oryx and Impalla.

sise a message for one of the pilots. Behind me the deck steward, a merry fellow, unseemly on a P. & O., was dancing to amuse some children.

"Ho," he wheezed, stopping suddenly and following my gaze shoreward, "there ain't many what goes ashore here, sir."

"Ay," said the skipper, eyeing him commiseratingly under half-closed lids, "we're aware o' that. But can ye tell me," he added, as the idea occurred to him, "what's become of the wee lads that dive for pennies?"

The steward's face lighted with joy. "Ain't you heard abaht that, sir? W'y, last trip ort, whilst the passengers was throwin' them money, along comes a shark and bites a little shaver raight in two."

The skipper glared at him.

"Swelp me Gawd, sir," protested the steward, shrilly. "I seen it wiv me own eyes."

That put the cap of gloom on all my anticipations, because, for me, the one redeeming feature of Aden's rocks was the living water that danced on the sandy shores. So I delayed no longer. I sought out my poetic companion, who was characteristically engaged in one of those earnest and lingering farewells that make sea-

voyages so very pleasant, and escorted him firmly to the head of the gangway. Then I went back for a few words with the Girl from Keppel Harbor. We were quite sure we should meet again . . . in Penang, perhaps.

"Insh'allah," she said; and we both laughed.

The little Somali boys rose, grinning, to their feet, flung their weight on the long sweeps, and away we went, foaming across the blue water. We swirled past a grey British cruiser, a Russian transport, in and out among high-pooped dhows with red Mohammedan flags fluttering astern and white sails swelling out like the breasts of swans, and straight across the bow of the fussy Tadjoura headed out of harbour on its weekly trip to D'jibouti, the port of the Abyssinian traders, across the gulf. We bumped the wet stone steps of the Abkari landing, and the baking, pitted rocks of Aden rose before us.

Instantly the soft memories of overnight slipped from our minds. We were in a world of work once more. We registered ourselves in the little thatched cottage of the harbour police, and were met by the Englishman whom I was relieving. The sun had treated him well. Except that he was somewhat anæmic and prone

to fever, over-silent, and with muscles that were slow to respond to his thoughts, he was little the worse for his two and a half years. As a matter of fact, he said Aden was a relief from the Gold Coast.

"But you've been here before?" he asked as the car threaded among the mixed mob back of the landing-stage.

I admitted it. "But that was a different matter," I protested. "I was homeward bound. All I saw was Cowasjee's Parsi clerk feeding his lions, and the stuffed mermaid in Mouna's."

The gloomy dejection that had fallen on my companion vanished in an instant. He sat up with a jerk.

"What did you say?" he demanded.

"Mermaid," explained the Englishman, turning his head. "The fishermen catch them along the coast. Nothing's changed," he added placidly. "The lions have grown up, and had to be shipped to a zoo; and they're building a railroad to Sheikh."

He saw I was surprised.

"Well, not exactly a *pukka* railroad. The military birds are doing it, of course—armoured locomotives, and all that. They don't intend to

pay dividends. But it's quite all right, just for the sake of hearing the whistle at night. Sounds like Euston—Euston—Euston. . . ."

The last words trailed off in a hoarse whisper. I looked at him in astonishment. His eyes were bulging, and his lips were fluttering. A camel-cart had swung into the road in front of us, and the Englishman was trying to concentrate in time to avoid it. But his muscles were too late in responding. We bent a mud-guard. The Englishman murmured plaintively to himself, and began to speak bitterly to the camel *wallah* in Arabic and Swahili. The coolie resented it, and a spindly Somali policeman came sauntering up, red *tarbush* cocked over his black brow, splay feet gently slapping the roadway, swinging a teakwood club with the insouciant air of a boulevardier.

But we worked the car free and resumed our way around the Crescent, where Queen Victoria squats in leaden effigy upon a square block of stone and marshals behind her a drab array of hotels and pallid, flat-faced buildings hiding beneath their porticos the activities of merchants, shipping-agents, consuls, curio-venders, and military and naval outfitters. We ran past moun-

tains of coal, and great sheds where the rattle of the riveter's hammer rose above the lapping of the waves, and through Hedjuff Gate on to the dust-swept plain of Maala.

Here we came upon the little station, where a tiny train was huddled behind a square, block-like locomotive covered with sheet metal. As we approached, a whistle tooted, and the little coloured train moved away among other larger blocks that were blue and white tinted godowns, and across a flat, brown stretch splotched with yellows and reds and big patches of blue sea; and suddenly there flashed into my startled memory a picture of myself as a very little boy crawling over an old Persian carpet, pushing a line of coloured blocks around the border, and tooting to myself with imaginative delight.

Beyond the station were the native shipyards, where graceful dhows were being fashioned out of seasoned teak from Burma, and the docks of Maala village, piled high with congested cargo —for Aden, though grim, is great. The ships that come rolling into her port go staggering out. When the Phœnicians were trading in Tyrian dyes, Aden was sending spices northward for the embalming of Egyptian mummies; and

now that the Phœnicians are no more, Aden crams Welsh coal into great ships so that her spices may still be carried northward.

The ships come laden with every variety of merchandise—cotton goods, yarn, agricultural implements, dynamos, motors, provisions, carriages, and coal. The Aden *gharry* is sister to the rig in which the old New England farmer rides to town—sister, born of the same mother-factory in some mill town on green slopes beside the Housatonic; and the Somali's robe, copied from a Roman toga, is spun from cotton plucked by Carolina darkies. And the ships go out to the west, sunk well below the water-line, choked with hides, skins, spices, incense, and coffee, brought hither in dhows from the Benadir coast and all the Red Sea ports.

Ascending the steep, tortuous slope of the Main Pass, we rolled through the deep, arched cleft in the volcanic ridge where the bones of Cain lie scorching in their tomb, and coasted down into the crater. Here was my future home. The eastern side of the extinct volcano had fallen into the sea, and the sun blazed in through the breach with all the fury of smothered flames. The encircling mountains, rough, pitted,

barren as a crusted grate, seemed to shut out any possibility of a wind from the north, and filled the air with the dusty odour of cinders.

So long as our car was in motion, dodging the great lumbering camels of India and the graceful creatures of Arabia, sleepy donkeys laden with panniers of water, rattling automobiles, military motors—armoured or emblazoned with the red cross—flocks of fawn-coloured goats, and all the flowing mass of foot-traffic, the rush of air kept us reasonably comfortable; but when we had passed the first line of shops that front on the *maidan,* and came to a stop in the shadow of the great, rectangular, barrack-like building that was at once our office, godown, and bungalow, the heat seemed suddenly to fall upon us like thick, hairy blankets. We climbed languidly up the long flight of stone-arched stairs to our mess quarters on the top floor, where a vast, tiled dining-room opened through spacious porticos upon a broad veranda overlooking the blue gulf. We sank into long chairs, and called for first-aid.

Over the dilapidated housetops of our Banian neighbours the abandoned citadel of Cirrir rose on our right, standing up against the white sky

like a stage setting of Bakst fixed for a drama, awaiting the reluctant actors.

I took a cautious glance at my wilting comrade. There was a wild, unsettled light in his eye as he reached for a cool drink.

"Where," he demanded feverishly, "where can I see one of those mermaids you were talking about?"

The hot days that followed were a blur of business, broken only by the departure of my companion for Mombasa, whence he was bound for Uganda, where cool hills rear their misty heights, and green, juicy grass grows underfoot.

There was little opportunity to look about me. I fell into a downy nest of work, for the mills of New England and the New South spin swiftly, and the Somalis and Abyssinians must be clad. Gradually, however, as I found opportunity to peer over the edge of my desk, I observed with delight that the cook was a Goanese Catholic—Diego Felice Fernandez—the houseboys were Indian Mohammedans, the *punkah-wallah* was an Arab follower of the Prophet and read his Koran with diligence the while he fanned the stagnant air, the *dhobies* were Somali maids, and from the godown below came the giggles and

chatter of two-score Hindu women with rings on their fingers and bells on their toes, sifting and sorting choicest longberry coffee from Mocha and Harrar, destined for the percolators of Manhattan and the Bronx.

After a while I stretched my arms and looked about. . . .

For almost a year I lived upon that rock, hating it as heartily as any one may. In all that time I did not see a blade of grass, or taste of fresh fruit, or smell the scent of a flower; nor did I travel more than six miles in any direction; for I was alien, and the British lines were particular, as their Turkish foes were ever on the *qui vive*. Even the clubs offered scant attraction: the Gymkhana, where sunburnt colonels danced about bare-armed and bare-legged, vigorously intent on making small boys chase tennis-balls; the International, torpidly blinking across its empty courts, contrasting with the sprightliness that vanished when the German merchants were sent to waste their festive talents on the internment camp at Ahmednagar; and the famous Union Club at Steamer Point, which sits with its feet in the bay, wet outside, wet inside, the only oasis in Aden, where, nevertheless,

you pay extra for water with your meals, and make or break a reputation according to your skill as a mixer of cool and titillating potions.

Here late guests not long ago, seated upon the gravel terrace, watched the flash of cannon and the bursting shells that flared over the salt-heaps of Khor Marksar. Here one evening I noticed several generals, the secretary of an empire, and a bevy of colonels mingling unmarked by the wilting crowd, whose interest was entirely absorbed by the few ladies available for dancing who still remained within the fortress. Here I have messed at table with fourteen officers of the army and navy, the only civilian among them, listening to a conversation that was entirely of bombs and ships and hydroplanes, of motorcars and guns. There was life here, but it was strangely one-sided, and, for all its turmoil and change of characters, it ran in ruts.

A stranger from a passing transport walks slowly on to the cement terrace, looking casually about for familiar faces. Suddenly his expression alters. "I'm damned," he says, approaching a seated group. "Fancy meeting you here!"

The seated friend does not even rise, but he shakes hands and indicates a chair. "Pull up,"

he says placidly. "Boy! What'll you have to drink? *Chota peg,* boy. . . . Where you going? Mesopot?" He introduces the others, and the conversation drifts drearily along.

At a table where a number of us have been messing for many days together, the youngest officer, apropos of something or other, says to the man on his right, "I was on your eleven, wasn't I?"

"Why, yes," says the other, "I think so."

"Fancy that! I thought I recognised you. But I know your younger brother better."

"Yes. James. He was killed about six months ago. What are you going to have?"

"A gin-and-bitters, if you don't mind."

There has been a booming all morning. This is not nice if it happens on mail day, because you can't keep your mind on market prices when you know there is action somewhere. At the club in the evening there are some officers, unusually dusty, hot, and surly. Some are playing bridge; others are at the bar.

"What was the show to-day?" says some one. The answer is grunts. "What happened?"

"Oh, strafe the beggars."

"What happened?"

"Usual thing: march out; shoot some guns; march back. Beastly hot, too. They got Blakeley. Bit of shrapnel."

And then you notice for the first time that Blakeley is not at his bridge-table querulously interrogating his partner.

One night I met a major who is well known among the Lambs in New York. He had just come out of Somaliland, where he had been trotting after the Mad Mullah on camelback. He laughed when I pointed out the absence of choleric colonels.

"You ought to meet Ashton," he said. "It was pretty generally understood that he didn't want any one shooting around his compound. Well, a young sub who didn't know anything about the rule shot a bird near the colonel's gate. The colonel saw him at the mess later, and gave him a most awful call.

" 'But where was the harm?' said the sub. 'Why——?'

" 'Why?' shouted the colonel. 'Why? Because I, Colonel Bernadotte Fitz-William Ashton, Commanding His Majesty's Ninety-eleventh Camel Strawcrumpers, damn well say

you shouldn't! That's why, you impertinent young scoundrel, you!' "

But the drab curtain falls. There are no choleric colonels in Aden. They are too busy with Turks to bother about birds. And I was generally too busy with cotton to bother about colonels. Let me tell you, there's not much that's drab about business here.

Squatted on the floor of dingy shops with a press of natives about, puffing sweet-scented Banian cigarettes, I discussed weave and weight with naked yellow men from Cutch, and brought into being contracts as lusty as war babies. Climbing over heaps of hides and plunging down dark alleyways, I came to low-ceilinged godowns, where, seated on piles of tusks, I argued with grizzled Abyssinian hunters and brokers on the relative prices of ivory in New York and Canton. In stifling godowns I watched the assembling of bales of skins of goat, sheep, gazelle, and leopard, and hides of lion, zebra, and bullock, destined for the tanneries of Boston and Philadelphia. I visited pearl-merchants who poured forth on velvet mats to tempt my hungry eye quivering globules that were like the tears of

laughter of a joyous mermaid. This reminds me that the last wail of my old comrade, bound for the black districts of Central Africa, had been for a sight of a mermaid sporting in the living waters of the gulf.

"You're kidding me," he wailed as the bumboat leaped toward his steamer. "It's impossible. There's no such thing."

"Oh, but, sir, there is," protested an obsequious Parsi passenger in the bumboat. "I have myself seen one, sir, stuffed, in the shop of Mouna."

My comrade shuddered.

"The natives eat them," I added.

"You always have to contribute your little bit of disgusting comment," he said savagely.

"Oh, well," I remarked serenely, "it won't be the last time you'll come in contact with flesh-eaters."

He answered this with a glare of stern compassion. Anyway, he had not seen a mermaid. And I had. . . .

In the evening, when most Europeans foregathered in the clubs for tea and tennis or bridge and billiards, adding bit by bit to the crust of the conventions of their race, I sometimes found myself alone in the bazaars, amazed at the variety

of human life, overwhelmed at the thought of the quantity and diversity of unheard-of ideas that must seep through these strangely stirring minds, and thanking God in my heart that I have ears to hear and eyes to see, though much that I observed was like phantoms passing through the fog that surrounds us all. Vassanjee takes a flea gravely from his wrist and with gentleness deposits it upon the ground, for who knows what soul is chained within? Sammbu walks wide of the village well with glassy eyes, for he has seen a devil sitting on the stone. Who knows? Perhaps he has; I see germs in every puddle. And poor Yusuf Sangoi cannot sleep; he still grieves for the lost days of his mad, merry youth when he was lord high executioner for his holiness the Mad Mullah. Is he any worse than the two prim ladies four hundred yards away who put their heads together over an unconscious snub administered by the general's wife, and damn the reputation of poor, giddy little Mrs. Gaylor?

I cannot say. My eye is only for colour—the futurist daubs of the bazaar, a pattern of races that cannot be copied: Banians of Cutch, Parsis of Bombay, Hindus of Bengal, Somalis

in togas whose patterns were looted from the last camp of Augustus, proud Abyssinians with stubble beards, Nubian slaves degenerated into free sweepers, Jews with dangling curls and watery eyes, Arabs with the grace and pride of Spaniards, Persians from the Gulf, flat-nosed Swahilis from Mombasa, Armenians, Greeks, and their brother Levantines. Dirty and clean, beggar and sultan, they shoulder their way through life together, glad to be alive and unashamed of their emotions—wailing their grief in public, or laughing aloud so that all the world may see their happiness.

"It is fated," says the merchant to the pleading beggar. "God will provide for you."

"Verily," says the man in rags, "we belong to God, and unto Him we shall all return. May He make no loneliness in thy case." And the merchant pays the dole.

"Bismillah!" says he, and dusts his finger-tips.

Down the dark alleys I made my way, sniffing the spicy odours as a hillman sniffs the perfume of the deodars, and even the stenches were not unpleasant to my nostrils. Vague arches reared their mystic curves above me; there were whispers in the dark and the alluring tinkle of

bracelets; uncertain chords of music drifted over the housetops; flames flickered in the cavernous gloom of the eating-houses; I stumbled over milch goats, and blundered among *charpoys*. In the broader thoroughfares I climbed around recumbent camels munching their fodder from the hands of tender guardians who, beyond the fetters of the law, would have delighted to bury their knives in a Kafir.

The road is a current of varied life, moving forward and backward, eddying around the gaming-tables and the stalls of venders of dates and melons, or down past the *choki* and *gharry* stand, where a few dilapidated American motor-cars have taken their place as inconspicuously as the old clipper ships that used to ride in the lee of Cirrir in the good days when the Marblehead skippers came swaggering up Aidroos Road, and the consul flew his flag in Crater.

I ran into an old friend.

"Hello," said Mohammed. "Come. Let us not talk here. We will have coffee."

So I went with him to drink coffee at his divan; and I was glad, for there I found two sultans, a grand vizier, and five merchants who

had come from Muscat in dhows with cargo of dates and rugs and honey.

Squatting on Shirazi rugs with our backs to the walls, or bolstered up with fine cushions, we sipped Arabian coffee, flavoured with cardamom and cinnamon, and gravely passed the hookah-tubes from hand to hand as we gossipped on many topics. The merchants said little. Their skin was still dry and wrinkled from the exposure of their long voyage, and they wore their fine brocades and hair-plaited turbans with ill comfort. The sultans were ingenuously absorbed in a game of parchesi; so the grand vizier, beaming at me over a pair of steel-rimmed spectacles, suggested chess.

He was a genial old fellow with a stubby, red beard and smooth-shaven upper lip. He had the head of a Barcelona boatman, save for his tightly wound turban and the silk scarf about his neck; but he played a swift, devastating game, and in less than fifteen minutes, shifting a rook, he cried out:

"Sheik el mat!" . . . And my king was gone.

As I moved away from the bright glare of the piazza into the darkness once more, I heard a lattice rattle lightly above me, a murmur of

voices, and the sound of suppressed laughter; and in my heart there suddenly leaped a joyous and indefinable emotion, for I was young, and the stars twinkled merrily in the dark canopy of the sky, the night was soft about me, and a woman's laughter was music in my heart.

I arrived at the Mess late for dinner.

An Irish captain had dropped in for pot luck with my messmate. He had come with news, for Kut had fallen and Townshend was taken. The captain's brother was with Townshend, and my messmate had been up the gulf for five years, so they fell naturally into argument.

"Here," said the captain, planting a musty mango for a marker, "is Kut—and the river to Basra runs here—and the pipe-line comes down from the oil fields somewhere about there——"

He marked the lines across my table-cloth with a knife, and took up his positions with crusts of bread. My messmate accepted battle; and the argument continued until the little Arab boy fell asleep over the *punkah* rope, and the butler came to make his nocturnal salaams, while a tom-tom throbbed near some distant mosque. Afar off I could hear the dull hammer of cannon.

In the morning a grinning, bare-legged Arab

boy comes staggering pigeon-toed into the office, bearing a huge tray of dates, candied fruits, and bottles of rose cordial. This is duly handed over to Diego Felice Fernandez, and I am presented with a complimentary note from Menahem and an invitation to call. It is a business call, but there is a matter of friendliness, for the old Jew and myself understand each other. He is the greatest merchant between Cairo and Bombay, the landlord of much in Port Said and more in Aden. His head is sound, his manner is gentle, and he judges people shrewdly. With his red *tarbush* pushed back from his forehead, his round face beaming pinkly above his white whiskers, his eyes twinkling, he has the air of a benevolent patriarch. He likes Americans for their fraternal spirit, and he told me a little story that makes me happy.

One Sabbath he embarked on a boat at Jaffa, having purchased and paid for a first-class ticket. For some inexplicable reason the captain objected to him and his companion travelling first class, and insisted that he pay a bonus or leave the ship. The Jew could not pass money on the holy day. In the midst of the altercation an American came by. He stopped, listened.

"Young man," he said, "don't worry for a moment. I'll pay the difference, and you can fix it up with me at Port Said."

Menahem has forgotten his name! But who was President of the United States thirty-odd years ago? He was the man.

It's curious that the kindly act of a President, done before I was born, should be of material assistance in the sale of goods turned out by the most modern of American mills. The ripple started at Jaffa still beats heavily on the Arabian shores.

Down the street is another friend, Mohammed Bazara. Not only is he a rich man; he is also a *sheikh*. In his divan you would think him a poor merchant, were it not for his proud bearing and languid grace. He is thin, wears a long, thin linen robe; his face is long and saturnine and topped with a little white skull-cap, or sometimes a simple yellow turban, while upon his feet are well-trod sandals. Upon his chin is a meagre tuft. He is continually reciting his beads, while his mind swiftly turns over the bullish tendencies of the American market, and the inroads of Indian and Japanese cotton. We have done each other favours, so we are at ease. As a special

treat he has brewed for me a cup of China tea.

"It is genuine China tea, the finest," he assures me, who have drunk it forty times a day in the dusty *yamens* of northern Shansi, in the moist, slimy alleyways of Shengfeng. He offers it to me in a tumbler, like a miniature mug of beer. It is thick and syrupy, and he stirs in more sugar, using an indelible-ink pencil in lieu of a spoon, so that the amber fluid becomes tinged with an exquisite purple that looks like a Persian cordial and tastes like the devil.

I leave him to call on Bhagwandass Dewjee, whom I find squatting on a table in a murky shop, picking his teeth with an air of abstraction. He is considerably more than half naked, and gives me the irreverent impression of a Buddha who has been on a bat. He bestows on me a toothless grin, a moist hand, and a sickeningly sweet Banian cigarette which I smoke with satisfaction. Then we talk of Manchester mills, and the shortage of dyes; for Bhagwandass, despite the caste mark on his forehead, is a heavy buyer, and knows his business.

Thus the film rolls before me. When I tire of the bazaar, I switch to the clubs. When I weary of the clubs, I turn and make my apolo-

gies for social delinquencies over fragrant tea poured by fair hands. When I feel the desire for a mental stimulant, I lounge into one of the hotels at Steamer Point or the outer office of Dinshaw Cowasjee's, where skippers from the shivering and simmering seas curse with delight at meeting, and grunt with disgust when the Parsi clerk hands them their papers and they know the bumboat is thumping at the landing-stage impatient to be off. Here I listen to true tales that would make me a liar to repeat—tales of sea-serpents, of submarines, of skies that fall and seas that writhe, of fight with fists and marlinspikes and flames.

Again, I step through a portière, following the majestic figure of Mohammed Omer, his heavy, black-and-white silk turban with its tassels of pearls marking the way through a gloomy passage. Then suddenly all thought of Aden falls away; the rasping roar of dusty winds is hushed; my own dull spirit seems to take on a consciousness of other days, and in my mind runs the poetry of Omar, in my ears sound the songs of Hafiz. A blaze of light, a jumble of vivid colour against an opulent background of rugs and cushions from Sanaa, Serabend, and Mousal,

the pulsing music of high-pitched voices accompanied on lute and flute and drum, a soft haze of smoke, and the throaty purring of two hundred narghilehs! Far at the end of the pavilion a youth in gorgeous raiment sits cross-legged on a dais with a scimitar before him. He is half stupefied by the kart leaves which he chews. Below him there are figures swaying in the rhythm of an Egyptian dance. We advance in a haze; a servant bawls out the announcement of our coming, and our foreheads and hands are smeared with attar of roses. The guests begin to file forward, flinging handfuls of coins into a great brazen tray which rings with the clash of the silver; and the young man descends from his dais and dances before them. To me it is a dream. To Mohammed it is a grim reality. The boy is embarking upon his first matrimonial adventure; and Mohammed joins with him to celebrate his sixth wedding.

"Why not?" says Mohammed, a smile flashing across his dark, handsome face. "May we not be happy?"

My youthful French companion, crippled in the wars, leans heavily on my shoulder, but rolls

his large eyes fervently toward the ceiling, and murmurs:

"Alla ul Allah!"

Mohammed smiles deprecatingly.

"Have you seen her?" pleads Max.

"Nay," says Mohammed. "It is not our custom. I do not see her until the night of the nuptials."

"Trustful man," says Max, and begins to hum, *"Je sais que vous êtes jolie."*

This is all very well. There is life and action and colour in all this, but it is very deceiving. Expose it to three hundred and sixty-five days of sunlight, under whose glare all colours fade. Drown the music in the roar of hot, dust-laden winds that sweep over the lips of Crater and smother the town in dust and dirt. Cripple all action with the flame of fever, the twinge of rheumatism, the ache of neuralgia; starve it with the vain desire for fresh vegetables and an empty craving for the taste of fresh fruit. Drop yourself in the middle of it for a year or two!

Medical men agree that the effect is not nice. The mind actually deteriorates, the body becomes torpid. A period of long indifference is suddenly followed by bursts of inane fury. Trifles

are the beginning of tempests. A sneeze starts a whirlwind. The memory becomes erratic; important matters are overlooked and not worried about, while little things cause endless irritation. One becomes oppressed with the monotony of life, like a caged animal, indifferent to the passing throng, snarling over bones, and sleeping.

At night I sleep on the roof, and grow on intimate terms with the constellations hanging above my head. The moon and the stars seem to set the still atmosphere aquiver with their silver radiance.

There are other watchers from the rooftops. From the shadows about me come the murmur of voices, whispers, laughter, the fitful cry of a baby, the grumble of a disgruntled man. But after midnight the town slumbers. One night an extraordinary thing occurred. For over a week we had suffered a constant temperature higher than blood heat. The air was saturated with salt moisture, and we sweltered and writhed with the tortures of prickly heat.

There was little sleeping on the rooftops—just a vague, restless stirring and the subdued whimpering of unhappy children. A cyclone was raging in the Arabian sea, which only added

to the weight of our atmosphere. After three sleepless nights I managed to doze off sitting in an upright chair. At three in the morning I was awakened by an unbelievable sound—thunder rumbling in the hills. At first I thought the Turks were attempting a nocturnal surprise. Then I felt a cold thrill run up my spine. Cool rain was beating in through the porticos! A babble of astonished and happy voices broke over the town. There was laughter; there were shouts; and in the white glare of the lightning you could see people running about dragging their *charpoys* under shelter, or with their faces turned up mutely to the drenching darkness above.

Rain is by no means unknown. The distant sky is often sad, though it sheds no tears. But when the rain does begin to beat on the burning ridge, it usually comes in a cloudburst. Cataracts leap two or three hundred feet from the crests of the denuded mountains and come rushing down the gorges in torrents. The eight-million-gallon tank—the work of Romans or Persians (no one seems to know, though their work endures!)—fills up in half an hour, and the water goes rushing through the heart of the town, down

a broad *nullah* and into the sea. The streets run like rivers, and the thick, white adobe roofs collapse like snow beneath the downpour. Half an hour after the rain has ceased, the main roads are dry.

In the "winter" months, when the temperature drops to eighty, the evenings seem cool and the hills become inviting places to climb. They rise almost two thousand feet in the air. Upon the crests a perfect gale may be blowing, or a breathless stillness hang. After the sun sinks its head upon a bed of purple and gold, slipping under the horizon as though beneath a coverlet, darkness pours like a fluid into the cup of Crater. The humming of the human hive mounts upward through the stilling air; it is a distinct hum, only occasionally punctuated by the soft low of cattle, the throaty roar of a camel, the distant bleat of a motor-horn.

The mountains are lonely, deserted. Few care to climb in them, for they are dangerous. They are not the granite slopes of home. The rocks are rotten and crumbly; they slip from underfoot; if you reach out to seize a handhold, it crumbles beneath your grasp. Pebbles go skittering away, and the roar of an avalanche

follows. Deep chasms gape suddenly at your feet. You find yourself without warning on the downward slope of a crest that overhangs the broiling sea. The very ugliness and danger are the chief attractions. There is a bit in particular that fascinates me.

Looking from this bleak pinnacle—the ugliest bit of mountain in the world, I think, with its masses of rotting rock, its iron crust curling in ragged edges, gypsum oozing from the crevices, vast stains of stinking guano, chalky bones bleaching on the ledges, and the unclean hawks wheeling in clouds over all, uttering their desolate cries—it seems to me to symbolise the end of all things.

Southward, I know, lie Socotra and Guardafui, the verge of the ancient universe when the stars were watchlights and the earth stood on pins. Over to the westward, below the melting horizon, stretches the Benadir coast, whence came the African wizard to seize Aladdin's lamp, and where even to-day a black veil of mystery hangs over the strange land and the fierce activities of the Mad Mullah. But eastward, where the broad beach sweeps away in an immeasurable arc, vanishing in the misty distance in the

direction of Oman, and northward behind the dim purple mountains where Nasrani never dares to tread, an ancient world, yet new to me, and overflowing with romance and adventure, lies tantalisingly near, but closed tighter than the passes beyond Darjeeling.

If you are caught on the mountains after dark, you snuggle close in some cranny, thank God for a pipe and stick there until the sun leaps out of the Indian Ocean. But when the moon is high and clear, the mountains are safe.

At two o'clock one morning I found myself with a Swiss companion on the highest peak. A wisp of cloud hung about us. We curled up in the rocks and slept. An hour later my companion awoke with a cry, clutching me by the arm. From a placid dream he had awakened to stare down a slope tumbling two thousand feet into the sea, while behind him black cliffs fell sheer away into unplumbed darkness.

The air was cool. We descended slowly. We came through the hollow-echoing tanks that may have once given back the sound of Roman picks or Persian sledges, and on into the bazaar.

Silence hangs heavy about us. The waning moon seems to touch the crest of the mountain-

ous ridge with a silver streak. A fisherman passes with his nets flung over a withered, brown shoulder.

Suddenly over the sleeping town a loud call echoes from minaret to minaret. The bazaar sighs and stirs about me; my heart leaps in my throat, for the muezzin is calling the world to prayer.

The sun climbs swiftly out of the east; the bazaar begins to murmur and clatter; the little world of men resumes its fretful uproar. Against the bleak mountains the call to prayer still echoes:

There is no god but God!

But Meghjee Permanund, the Hindu, fingering his bolt of cloth, murmurs to himself:

"The risk is in the mouth, but the profit is beyond the head."

A Somali of the Benadir Coast. The Wonderful Teeth of the Somalis are Preserved With the *Mushmak*, a Chewed Twig.

The First Picture of the Apostate Prince, Lidj Yassou, Taken in the Turban of a Mussulman.

Lidj Yassou, as the Reigning Prince of Abyssinia, in His Most Gorgeous Raiment.

Cross and Scimitar in Abyssinia

I. The Prince Dons a Turban

ABOUT a year after my arrival at Aden there occurred in Abyssinia an event shrouded yet rich in the mystic gloom of mediævalism; and, at the same time, behind the curtain of its isolation, stirring with all the clashing tumult of contemporary times. I saw much of it—as through a shimmering mist—but, so far as I know, no words have as yet been written in English to describe it, save such perhaps as have taken their way to the dusty archives of Whitehall.

What I did not myself hear and see, I learned from chance-flung phrases over the shoulders of warriors on cantering ponies; over glasses of *tedj* in thatched *tokhuls;* amid the clatter and confusion of native troop trains; at dainty luncheons amid incongruous settings from the lips of silent men of great experience; and

particularly over a map sketched on a scrap of paper by a Germano-Ethiopean, while at the other end of the room there was uproar and crashing of chairs as some Greeks and renegade Italians struggled furiously over a matter of no consequence to us.

If I have slipped in particulars, it is due to mixed tongues, incoherent phrases, and the distractions of personal events—which I pass over lightly. . . .

My good fortune, then, found me in Djibouti, the port of French Somaliland, stranded, waiting for a boat that never came, just at the time when Abyssinian troubles had swelled to the bursting point. For at least a year all Northeast Africa had been feeling the restiveness of too long a period of peace. Sporadic outbreaks in Somaliland and in the Soudan gave sufficient indication that the hot lid was quivering. District Commissioners of conquered provinces, thin-lipped, went coolly on with their work, and sent in reports that were forgotten in the tumult of the times.

Suddenly Somalis raided along the Juba River, and white settlers and officials were wiped out; a report came that the Mad Mullah was again

making hell along the Benadir coast; Great Britain unexpectedly found itself with a formidable war on its hands at Darfur in the Soudan; the desert Dankalis began to cut at the metre-gauge French railway that extends from Djibouti, on the Gulf of Aden, almost to Addis-Abeba, capital of Abyssinia, about five hundred miles westward; and then came the news that threatened to set Africa on fire from Mombasa to Suez.

Lidj Yassou, ruler of Abyssinia, had openly apostasised from the ancient Christian Coptic religion, the faith of his people, and had declared himself of the family of Imam, through whose veins ran the blood of the Prophet. Abandoning his capital, he had gone to Harrar, the ancient seat of the government, which lies close to British Somaliland, and there openly gave his sympathy to the fanatic Somalis. . . .

While I was seated at an iron table in front of the Café de la Paix, sipping grenadine, listening abstractedly to the babel of voices about me, and gazing helplessly across the blazing Place Menelik, a friend, an energetic and resourceful Frenchman, came breezily up to me and placed a paper upon the table.

"Sign it," he said; "and to-morrow we shall go."

"Where?" I asked.

"To Abyssinia. Where else? The Railway Company is going to send a train through to bring these *evacuées* back to their posts." He scornfully indicated the gibbering crowd of Armenians, Arabs, Abyssinians, and stray Somalis who surrounded us. "You sign the paper to acquit the Company of responsibility. You understand?"

So the next day at dawn we were off.

The train was a conglomerate string of wagons separated into four classes, and jammed with men, women, and children of many races from Asia, Europe, and Africa. Unmindful of the sweltering heat, they stared with bulging eyes across the quivering deserts and along the rugged slopes of the barren mountains where nothing seemed to live save heavy-maned baboons who fled behind rocks and cursed the train as it panted by. As each unharmed station hove in view, the *evacuées* cheered shrilly, and made sorties *en masse* with wine bottles, canteens, tin basins, and *chatties* to catch the overflow from the watering tank. The windows of the cars

bristled with rifles, and every man hung a heavy revolver upon his hip and twirled his moustache with nervous fierceness as the danger points approached. The Greeks, seeking favours, fawned upon the Abyssinians, embracing them and patting their hands affectionately. Babies whined fretfully; women shouted shrilly to their men; men and boys tumbled excitedly over each other in frantic efforts to regain their seats when the engine whistled; for to be left behind was a terrifying thought. In my compartment, my three French companions, after half an hour's friendly and animated conversation, offered each other cigars, drew books from their packs, and gave themselves up to reading. One read the *Revue des Deux Mondes;* another, "Diseases of the Eye"; and the third, Galsworthy's "Man of Property."

At Dire-Daoua, in the province of Harrar, the human cargo was discharged in a jumbled, vociferous stream which overcame the frenzied Abyssinian Customs guards and flowed into the town.

That night while at dinner a message came to my companion offering us the hospitality of a native troop train if we wished to continue on

to Addis-Abeba in the metropolitan province of Shoa. We gladly accepted, and stumbling out into the darkness, found the Chief Magistrate down a dark lane. At the base of a baobab tree, in the flickering light of a candle, he glanced at our passports, with his armed escort peering over our shoulders, and willingly gave us permission to proceed.

Thirty-six hours later, in company with the political director of the railway, we rode on mule-back past the royal *Guebi* in Addis-Abeba, the first Europeans to enter since communication with the outer world had been cut.

I pass over the details of the upward journey —the recent battles along the line; cattle wantonly slaughtered by raiders, and the bleaching bones of men picked clean by hyenas and vultures; pillaged posts in lonely desert tracts; the routing of Somalis, and the burning of their village. Nor is it pertinent to describe fulsomely the glorious aspect of the country—the broad deserts of shimmering gold; the purple-hued mountains; the rolling uplands; the deep valleys with torrents of clear water; the lush forests swarming with game; the vast herds of cattle that strayed across the tracks; the blossoms

of scarlet tamarind, the Nile-green euphoebes dusted with gold, the umbrella-like mimosas; and, above all, the numerous birds of brilliant hues that flashed like living gems in the green depths of the forests, or flickered like broken rays of sunlight across the open plains. . . .

At the very time when we were penetrating further into this glorious country, discovering an added charm with every passing mile, its deposed sovereign, far behind us, was crossing the tracks and seeking the safety of an exile in the scorching desert wilderness of Danakil. . . .

On the continent of Africa there remains today only this one nation, without exception, that dares call itself independent.

The ancient empire of "Ethiope," more generally known as Abyssinia, occupies the lofty plateau which feeds the waters of the Abai River and forms the eastern watershed of the White Nile south of Khartoum on one side, and, on the other, drains into the desert land along the lower Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. With a territory of over three hundred thousand square miles, and a population of almost eight million natives, this nation has watched the rise and fall of many peoples; has stood firm when the floods of

fanatic Islam poured around it, lapping at its buttresses; and has thrown back with comparative ease the invasion of European powers. The Mahdi, who hurled himself unhesitatingly upon the might of Britain gathered at Omdurman, could make no inroad upon Abyssinian territory; the Arabs, who overran warlike Nubia, were powerless to do more than make occasional forays across the northern border to snatch slaves for the Yemen; and the Somalis, respected by all other of their enemies, are looked upon with careless scorn by the Christian warriors of the west and north.

It is strictly a feudal nation, with all the characteristics of mediæval Europe, yet it can call into the field a regular army twice as great in numbers as the standing army of the United States. Furthermore, every freeman is well acquainted with arms and irregular warfare, and becomes a warrior at the call. Bullets and empty cartridge shells pass as currency in the market place. I have not seen an unarmed Abyssinian; yet in the days of Menelik a traveller blundering through the country could go from north to south, east to west, by the loneliest paths and to the remotest hamlets, as secure

as a nocturnal wanderer along the Victoria Embankment.

When finally Menelik's days were numbered, however, and the old "Lion of Judah" felt his firm tissues relaxing and his keen senses stupefying with the general decay, he assembled the great *rases* about him, and pledged them by most solemn oath to support as his successor to the throne of Ethiopea, Lidj Yassou, his comely grandson, son of his daughter, Waizaro Shoa Rögga, and *Ras* Mikael, King of the Wallo country. And they, still wholly dominated by the will of the inflexible old chieftain, yielded to his wishes. It is certain, though, that they looked upon the heir to the throne with secret disfavour, as he was obviously a weak and vacillating youth, possessed of that unfortunate comeliness seldom associated with stamina, and rendering its possessor an unconscious victim of every flattering suggestion.

Menelik was a great monarch, and his deeds have glorified his name, so that even in this day to swear "by Menelik" is an oath more binding than the most sacred vow. Under his rule the nation rose to high dignity, was feared by its neighbours, and earned the respect of the Great

Powers. But when he disappeared behind the mysterious veil that was drawn before the last stage of his waning life, and Lidj Yassou by easy gradients found himself upon the throne of Ethiopea, the country relapsed once more into its deep-rutted mediævalism. The fine roads of the capital became rock-studded troughs and quagmires; justice became fickle; the stern laws of Menelik were merely memories; indifference succeeded the vigilance of old; little remained of the simple splendour of the past save the unalterable beauty of the billowing mountains and the gentle vales.

To all degrees of this general sinking back of their nation the *rases* were not unaware. They watched with bitterness and dismay the wanton indifference of Menelik's successor, already a prey to sycophants, and scornful of the advice of his elders. Bound by the oath of their late monarch, they feared to act; and, moreover, the occasional flashes of brilliancy displayed by the Prince revived their flagging hopes. However, two elements finally began to identify themselves so closely with the Prince's destiny as to render his ultimate fate certain. These were his increasing sensuality and his overpowering

superstition. He yielded irresistibly to the dusky charms of his countrywomen; and then, with whetted passion, looked for conquests among the fairer Arabs and Egyptians who had passed before his smouldering gaze. Here, however, his religion and the traditions of his people raised formidable barriers that could not be passed unless overthrown.

Like many before him who lacked the strength to guide their own destinies, Lidj Yassou began then to consult the famous sorceresses of the land. Chief of these was a wrinkled daughter of Islam who daily received tribute of earth and water from far countries, and whose potent spells could bind the very Nile. By her art many an upstanding warrior had found himself at nightfall changed into an hysterical hyena, and it was common belief that if she would release the spell, more than a few croaking crows would speak once more the soft syllables of Ethiopea. Lidj Yassou wore an amulet charmed by her. None knows what weird suggestions she whispered in his ear, but the result was becoming manifest. One simple evidence of the ambition that grew within him was a silly passion for photographs. In his capital there was a foreigner from the

Levant who monopolised the making of portraits have paid with the honour of his daughter. His collection numbered hundreds of portraits in a of the Prince—for which patronage he is said to great variety of attitudes and in many costumes; but the most significant of all was one showing the Prince wearing a turban.

This simple portrait, the plainest in all the collection, vividly illumines the Prince's conduct. By becoming a convert to Islam he believed that in one act he could become ruler over half the world, easily impose his might upon the rest, and at the same time secure to himself all the sensual delights that are permitted the lax Mussulmans of the present day.

No one knows exactly what intrigues were now initiated, but the first alarming evidence of his intended apostasy was a flag which he presented to the Turkish Minister. This flag bore the pregnant phrase:

"La Ilahi Ilallah, Mohammed ressoul Allah."

Immediately the Ministers of the Allied Nations, which were then deeply involved in war, were aroused. The British Minister was particularly concerned, as arms were being sent from Abyssinian arsenals to the Somalis across

Negro Border Tribesmen From the Equatorial Provinces of Southern Abyssinia.

The Beau Brummel of a Small Native Village Near

Somali Women of the Ogaden and Somaliland Are as Fine of Feature as the Arab

the border, and the Soudan and British East Africa were beginning to feel the consequent unrest. Pourparlers commenced, in the midst of which Lidj Yassou, with cynical indifference, departed from the capital, having decided nothing, leaving the Government behind him in a state of suspension. The Ministers vigorously protested, but as there was no one to receive the protest, their vigour was vain.

Now that action succeeded to dreams and rumours, many startling reports came to the ears of the Ministers.

It was learned that the Prince had visited remote Djidjiga, where he treated the native Somalis as brothers and compatriots. They made *fantasia* before him, and he presented them with a banner upon which was an emblem with a scimitar arranged in such a fashion as to indicate that it hung over the necks of all Christians. Without hesitation the Somalis thereupon appeared in their public places, making *fantasia*, and waving banners bearing this sinister emblem. The Prince even went further and converted a Christian Church, the property of the state, into a mosque.

Later he appeared at Dire-Daoua, in the

famous coffee province of Harrar, then under the governorship of young *Ras* Taffari, who was destined to become the Regent. *Ras* Taffari had particular reason for complaint; for a short time before, when forty-five Abyssinians had had their throats cut by Somalis of the Ogaden, and the offenders had been duly captured and sent in chains to Addis-Abeba for judgment, Lidj Yassou not only pardoned them, but treated them with distinction.

Upon his appearance in Dire-Daoua, the local prelates, therefore, disturbed by the rumours that were then rampant, and particularly concerned by the growing power of the Mussulmans within the city,—a mosque having recently been erected there,—appeared before him and urged that some provision be made for a new Christian Church. With a flash of wit that must have struck the prelates aghast, the grinning Prince said:

"There is the new Mosque. What better place to guard the Presence?"

Proceeding then to the walled city of Harrar, he gave himself over openly to the friends of Islam.

Donning a turban, he went in company with

his Mussulman friends to a mosque. Leaving his sandals outside, he entered as a true follower of the Prophet, going through the ablutions and prostrations with the punctiliousness of a convert. He then gave alms freely at the doorway, as is the custom, and proceeded immediately to a hostel where there were women to receive him, and champagne flowed. In this city he espoused the daughter and the niece of Abba Djifar, the daughter of the Emir Abdulali, the daughter of Nagadras Mohamed Abou Bekir, the daughter of Chief Adal, and many concubines besides.

Harrar now became a gathering place for Somalis and Dankalis. The former, haughty and scornful, with snowy togas flung over their shoulders, stalked through the streets, many abreast, yielding place to no one, and handling their spears with careless grace. The lean Dankalis, glorying in the flesh-pots, squatted about the hanging carcasses of freshly killed sheep, cutting off dripping pieces with their keen knives, eating the raw flesh. The Abyssinians, meanwhile, ignored by their Prince, who was now almost constantly surrounded by Mussulmans, smothered their fury in silence.

One act that particularly incensed the Harrari was over a point of law. It is the custom in Abyssinia to maintain the *cadi* system. The *cadi* sits in open court in the market place, and before him offenders are brought, and cases tried; and very often the bystanders are called upon to make the decision. Well, one day the Mussulmans accused their own *cadi* at Harrar:

"You drink beer and hydromal contrary to the prescriptions of the Koran." Lidj Yassou thereupon ordered him to be publicly judged by the Christians.

"Think what it would mean," the Abyssinians protested among themselves, "if he ordered Mussulmans to judge us in a parallel case!" Strangely enough, their sense of justice was further deeply moved at the thought of Christians being made judges of laws of which they knew nothing.

Though astonishing, it is an evidence of Lidj Yassou's fatuous egotism that he took it for granted no serious opposition would be made against his actions by the Abyssinians, particularly by natives of Shoa, the metropolitan

province, land of the ruling race, and seat of the capital, Addis-Abeba.

As a matter of fact, in Addis-Abeba a swift and furious opposition did develop.

Both prelates and *rases,* overcome with indignation, met secretly and concerted plans against the apostate Prince; while at the same time the lesser chiefs and clergy were stirring the freemen of Shoa to a patriotic and religious fervour of revolt. In a remarkable petition to Zeoditou, daughter of Menelik and aunt of the Prince, they urged her, in the following terms, to consider their grievances:

"Deliver us from our oath of fidelity, because we will not submit ourselves to Islam, and we do not wish to give up our country to the stranger because of the malice of this Lidj Yassou, who has conducted his royalty so badly. We will not permit a Negus who has renounced his faith to govern us; and, finally, we will never consent to change our religion."

Fed by expressions such as these, and fully aware of the tragic and imminent danger in which their country was placed, the nobles and warriors of Shoa besought Zeoditou to take the

throne. On the twenty-seventh of September, 1916, therefore, a *coup d'état* was accordingly effected in Addis-Abeba without any bloodshed other than that caused by the bullets that flew from the explosive rejoicings of the natives. Waited upon by the nobles and a small army of soldiers with many batteries of field guns, Zeoditou ascended the throne. Lidj Yassou was declared deprived of his royal rights and prerogatives, and a solemn curse was pronounced upon him. *Ras* Taffari was made Regent and heir to the throne.

Nothing could be richer in the picturesque and pious mediævalism of the occasion than the concluding words of the gentle Empress, called from her retirement to preserve the faith among her people.

"Henceforth all my glory rests in you," she said, "because after Menelik have I not said my supreme adieu to all which is of this world? . . . I pray the Lord to bless your noble resolutions and to give His grace to all of you, the puissant and valiant of Ethiopea, and at last to lead you to good end."

More to the point, however, was the message of his "Beatitude the *Abouna* Matheos, Servitor

of Christ, son of the Evangelist St. Marc, and Archbishop Primate of the Royalty and people of Ethiopea."

Speaking with full authority of the Alexandrian Synod of the Coptic Church, and backed by the one hundred thousand members of the clergy within Abyssinia, the message had the full force of, and was strangely similar to, an ancient Papal Bull of Excommunication. He solemnly prayed that the offending Prince and any one who denied the authority, *ex cathedra,* of the Primate, should "incur the indignation of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; that he incur anathema in the name of the twelve Apostles and of the 318 Fathers of the Council of Nice; and that the malediction of Arius and the reprobation of Judas fall upon him . . . and I, Matheos, by my humble parole, I excommunicate him. . . ."

At this solemn moment, the unfortunate Prince, heedless of his impending doom, was probably playing with one of the brainless toys who had tripped him from his throne. . . .

When these messages were received in Dire-Daoua and Harrar, a tumult immediately burst forth. I do not know what action the Prince

then took, but almost immediately his weaknesses betrayed him. Spurred on by the daring and wily Mussulmans who supported him, he made a few weak, vain efforts to rise triumphant upon the flood that had set against him. He looked for support from the Somalis. In the meantime, however, the Abyssinians in Harrar city, having provoked the Somalis by gibes and insults to such a point of fury that a desert tribesman finally struck one of them, fell upon them, and with rifles, spears, and scimitars massacred almost all the hated tribesmen that were within the city. At the height of the slaughter, the British Consul, appalled at the wanton bloodshed, went alone to Baltcha, the acting Governor of the city, and urged that he make some efforts to bring it to a stop.

Baltcha, most impressive of men, though a eunuch, gave a casual order, and the slaughter immediately ceased.

Nobody knew what turn the trouble would now take, or what support the Prince could count upon.

His father, *Ras* Mikael, King of the Wallo country, was quiescent, and it was believed he would ignore his son. To the south and east

there were raids and skirmishes in lonely places. One ambitious attempt was made by the Prince's followers to get possession of the little railway between Dire-Daoua and Addis-Abeba; but a small force of Shoan troops arrived at the spot a few hours before them, and having picked their position, with a couple of mountain guns and mitrailleuses they scattered and demoralised them, killing several hundred. The Prince, likewise, with a large force of Somalis, advanced upon Harrar; but the Abyssinians went forth and met them, and smashed them; and the Prince, believing that all was now lost, no longer trusting in the shining destiny that had been burnished for him, fled with a few companions into the fastnesses of the unconquered and unexplored land of Danakil. . . .

This, apparently, was the end of the Prince.

So easily had he been toppled from his throne, and so firmly established did the new Empress appear to be fixed as the successor of her father, Menelik the Great, that the Shoans were restless and uneasy at their swift success. They looked about them undecidedly. Something—they seemed to feel—was wanting. What element had they not taken into consideration? . . .

Having come safely through some of these episodes, my companion and myself believed, too, that the trouble was over in the capital. He was eager to seize a commercial opportunity that presented itself; and I, indirectly, was similarly concerned. At the last moment, however, we found that our impetuousness had overcarried us, and that we had landed with both feet in what looked like a promising trap.

And at the same time the Shoans, seizing their weapons anew, prepared for genuine trouble.

One of the Last Pictures of Menelik II, King of Kings of Ethiopa, Seated in State With Members of His Council.

Camp Visitors Along the Old Trade Route Between Nairobi and the Abyssinian Frontier.

II. Revenge of Abou "Roll-Them-Up"

IN Addis-Abeba itself there were rapid and startling developments.

We suddenly learned that the railroad had been cut behind us; all means of telegraphic communication with the outer world had been severed; and a large army was advancing upon Addis-Abeba from the north, threatening to destroy the city and annihilate its occupants, including the foreign Ministers, who, with a few exceptions, were the only Europeans within the city. We spent our time riding, exploring, learning the lay of the land, catching up every rumour that flew, and preparing for whatever fate might befall us.

It came to me, as to many others, as a great surprise that an army should be sweeping down victoriously from the north when the weak Prince had been blotted out of consideration far to the south-eastward. We had believed that his father, *Ras* Mikael, ashamed of the conduct of his son, had watched his dethronement

with apathetic sorrow. Certainly when the news first came to the Negus, King of the Wallo country, that his wanton son had been hurled from the high place, and was now a wanderer in the deserts, he did nothing nor said a single word to betray his thought. This silence was taken by the emotional Shoans to indicate that the dark, stern old warrior stood strong for the faith above all things, and was ready to pledge his fealty to Zeoditou.

The succession had been fully established; and it was felt that the throne of the daughter of Menelik was secure. Broken, the Somalis had been scattered among the hills of their inhospitable country; the Dankalis dispersed across their burning sands; and the fallen Prince, with a diseased mind, was a wanderer in the company of the disappointed and furious Mussulman, Abou Bekir, father of one of his concubines. In the conglomeration of villages which form the capital of Shoa, all was serene. Baltcha, the calm, pious, but ferocious eunuch, held the place under his thumb with the same imperturbability with which, in his good time, he had stayed the massacre of Somalis in Harrar. All that was necessary to consolidate the empire

and to complete the harmony of its ancient people was the reassuring presence of the Negus Mikael. Eyes were turned unconsciously to the north; ears were alert for news from Dessie; every rider who came by Entoto was urged to tell when the Negus would come. And finally riders appeared in haste on blown ponies at Ankober, and thence the wires hummed with the intelligence that the Negus was on his way at last, mounted on his war-horse, "Roll-them-up" . . . and forty thousand warriors with him.

Unadvised by friends or counsellors, the Negus had yielded to his pride. Tortured with agony at the shame that had come upon his family, he forgot the treachery to his God; he scornfully ignored the sufferings of his country; he thought only of his son, his comely Yassou, blood of his blood, bone of his bone, an outcast, despised and rejected by the people of Shoa. Mindful of the scene where Menelik on his deathbed had bound the *rases* by most solemn oath to support the youth as their future emperor, he cursed *their* treachery, and starting up with his hand clutching the hilt of his scimitar, swore that honour would be avenged.

To the north, the east, and the west, couriers

on the swift horses of Wallo carried the word of the Negus to his vassals. Over the rolling table-land of Wallo, into the dark, unexplored forests by the shores of Tsana, across the deserts of Tigre' went the call. The war drums throbbed and thundered in remotest villages; the tom-toms beat by every nomad's camp; there was a rattling of lances, a grinding of new edges on old scimitars, shrill war-songs that seemed to set the desert stars to quivering; and then came the *rases* of the North, leading their warriors by tens and hundreds and thousands into inhospitable Dessie, lapped in the rugged mountains, where the dark, unsmiling Negus awaited them.

Mussulman and Christian in unnatural fraternity, they then poured through the country of the Menzes, devastating that unfortunate land. Wherever life was encountered, death and desolation were left behind. Each village was surrounded, and the ruthless slaughterers slashed everything that moved. Resistance was beaten down as the tide beats through sedges. Ominous as the flight of vultures, the host, swollen in numbers, inflamed with success, swept down on Addis-Abeba.

They advanced as barbarians advance, irregu-

larly, on horse, on mule, and on foot. Most warriors had with them for attendants a squire, a shield bearer, and a couple of slaves. In the advance it was hard to distinguish master from slave, for all were draped in robes of dirty cotton cloth, with home-spun blankets on their shoulders, and crude raw-hide sandals laced across their feet. Of weapons they had every variety, from curved Arabian daggers to field-pieces captured from the Italians at Adua. Bandoleers were slung over their togas; slim scimitars curved behind them; and the horsemen bore long lances which they could fling with deadly precision. They followed no roads, nor observed strict rules of marching, each *ras* leading his force by whatever way suited him best, whether along a ridge of hills or following the meanderings of a convenient valley. All that was necessary was to keep in touch with the Negus, and to maintain as well as possible their roughly assigned positions relative to the centre.

At night the Negus retired to his unpretentious tent of green canvas, and to this headquarters came the great war chiefs or their couriers to take orders or submit reports. In the day time the Negus led the van of the army,

with *Dedjatch* Tadela in advance. At the end of the left wing marched *Ras* Omar, follower of the prophet, advancing with blood in his eye, and *"Allah ilallahi"* upon his scornful lips. Closer in on the same flank came *Ras* Gebri-Gzaibyar, who brought with him mules and mountain guns; while ranging far on the right were the warriors of *Ras* Gebri-Christos. And this last was a curious circumstance.

At one time *Ras* Gebri-Christos had been son-in-law of the Negus himself, who bestowed upon him rich lands and large favours. But Gebri-Christos, wearying of his princess bride after several years, in the easy manner of the Abyssinians in such matters sent her back to her father's thatched palace. Infuriated, the Negus stripped his vassal of all he had bestowed upon him. Beyond this he did nothing, for Gebri-Christos was within his right, and moreover he was a warrior of distinction. So nothing worse befell him then to suffer the confiscation of the chattels his wife had brought, and to know that he lived under the hatred of the stern Negus. Now this account may be false, for in this crisis he was chosen by the Negus to command the right flank and to carry it alone, which he did,

beating forward like the black wing of a pouncing raven; but in view of later events I am inclined to believe it. Anyway, so ran the gossip of the market place.

Mikael's rage was cold and calculating. Though advancing with the rapidity of Asiatic horse, his army, nevertheless, was in firm control, and he left no necessary diplomatic precaution neglected. Chief of these was to hold the confidence of his Christian followers, and to wean from the Shoans the support of the Church, he himself having become a Christian only at the time of his marriage to Menelik's younger daughter. To accomplish his end, he selected an ecclesiastic of Coptic descent who was head of the Church in the kingdom of Wallo, and him he named *Abouna* Petrus, head of the Christian Church in all Ethiopea, and subject only to the synod at Alexandria. Confident, then, of the spiritual satisfaction of his followers,—the Mussulmans embracing death in the name of Allah, and the Christians at their side confident of salvation through martyrdom,—he advanced fearlessly.

At Ankober, *Ras* Omar, the Mussulman, met the first of the Shoan forces, six thousand strong,

who had pushed forward under the leadership of the brave Lul Seged in an effort to check the invasion. *Ras* Omar's fanatics overwhelmed them; Lul Seged found his eternal couch upon the field of battle; and the few who remained of his force were sent flying southward towards Addis-Abeba to pant out news of the disaster within the lines of the gathering Shoans.

Following swiftly, but losing time in idle skirmishes here and there,—for each man provided his own commissariat and was obliged to forage by the way,—the army of the Negus at last came to Silti, a small village two days' march northeast of Addis-Abeba, and here halted; for the Shoans had formed a camp at Koromasch, a short distance beyond, and were apparently ready for battle.

The Negus Mikael was anxious to begin the conflict at once; but he was forced to hesitate. His followers had done hard marching and fierce fighting. Moreover their impetuosity was greater than their endurance, and there was danger of overthrowing themselves in too hasty an attempt to annihilate the enemy. Accordingly the old green tent was pitched on an eminence, a council of *rases* was called, and the

soldiers bivouacked for night. Mikael knew that he was opposed by *Fitaorari* Apte Guirgious, Minister of War and Governor of the Equatorial Provinces, and he did not make the mistake of underestimating the courage, shrewdness, and determination of his old fellow-in-arms. It is true that the *Fitaorari* was second in command to *Ras* Taffari; but at this time the young Regent's name bore more weight than his scimitar, and he willingly accepted the counsel of his older chieftain.

The Negus, therefore, took time to consider; but before his *rases* had yet expressed their ideas,—while, indeed, they were still exchanging the fulsome compliments and many little courtesies that are the custom of chivalrous and warlike people, and were pledging each other in *tedj,* the golden wine of their native hills, made of honey and herbs,—a hubbub arose at the entrance to the tent, and into the presence of the council under escort of a guard of spearsmen came a messenger from *Fitaorari* Apte Guirgious.

In the name of Menelik, the leader of the Shoans offered peace. He pointed out that the war was internecine; that nothing could be

gained by it but further strife; and that so long as it continued they opened their country to foreign aggression. If the Negus were willing, he suggested that he submit his terms of peace to be considered by the throne.

This offer had a triple effect on the Negus. Coming from the Minister of War, it astonished him; secondly, it flattered him for the awe he had so quickly inspired; and lastly, it made him hesitate. If it were possible for him to obtain his object without a pitched battle, so much the better for him; for his army would then be intact and greatly strengthened by the surrendering Shoans. Nevertheless, first dismissing his council, he sent back word that he would only consider the unconditional surrender of the Shoans. This, he felt, would be conclusive. Great was his astonishment in the morning, therefore, when a messenger returned bearing a weak reply from the *Fitaorari*.

"It is beyond my power," the *Fitaorari* pleaded, "to surrender my forces without resistance, or at least until I secure the consent of the Empress. It will be impossible to obtain this consent until a swift courier can bear your

terms to Addis-Abeba, and the proposition is there discussed."

The Negus immediately came to the conclusion that the *Fitaorari,* lacking in strong *rases* to spur him on, had lost heart. He felt now that the Shoans feared him and were anxious to avoid battle. Moreover there was excellent reason to believe that the Empress, dragged unwillingly from her retirement, might consent to the Negus himself, her brother-in-law, being elevated to the throne. So he agreed that word should be sent to Addis-Abeba; and he immediately consolidated his forces in the same relative positions that they held in marching, placing the field pieces on either side of his own encampment, and extending his front.

Now the *Fitaorari* Apte Guirgious's offer of peace was merely a ruse to gain time; for the Shoan forces were slow in assembling.

When there is no necessity for haste, Shoa alone can mobilise a vast number of armed and courageous warriors whose equal is not to be found elsewhere in Africa. But these men were scattered at the very moment when they were most urgently required, for the danger was im-

minent. The word went through the land, therefore, for the *rases* to assemble in all haste with what men were at hand, leaving word for the tarriers to follow after. And so the chieftains rode into the capital with their small bands, and out again northward. Haile Guirgious, Governor of Damot and Godjam, who ordinarily could assemble a large army, came at the call with only a thousand warriors, and with this meagre crew took his post on the right flank. Other *rases* entered the field with only a few hundred men to support them. By means of the railway several thousands were brought up from Dire-Daoua. And thus by small, scattered bands the ranks of the Shoans were filled, until at last a loosely organised army was got together of about eighty thousand men, with many mitrailleuses and perhaps fifteen or twenty guns.

The *Fitaorari* grouped these men under the greater *rases,* and placed them hastily in position as follows:

On the right flank was Haile Guirgious; on the left flank was Ligaba Bayana; and the centre was held with *Ras* Demissie in advance, *Fitaorari* Apte Guirgious in the van, and *Ras* Taffari, the youthful regent, in support.

The country was billowy tableland, with gentle vales through which clear, cold streamlets flowed, while on the slopes were occasional copses of juniper and wild fig trees. A few peasants' *tokhuls* oozed smoke through the thick thatched roofs, and sheep and cattle browsed in the long grass. It was generally level, but forward and immediately to the left of *Dedjatch* Tadela's camp on the side of the invading forces was a hill which lifted itself above the surrounding meadows and dominated both camps. Ignoring modern ideas of tactics until forced upon them by necessity, both sides disregarded the importance of this eminence. . . .

After waiting three days for word from Addis-Abeba, the Negus at last lost patience and began to doubt the wisdom of his delay. This doubting of his own judgment enraged him. Action always conquers diplomacy; and so he sent word that he would wait no longer. . . .

On this afternoon, or the day before, I had gone riding with a party from the British Legation—the British Minister and his wife, the Consul General and his wife, and the military attaché—to explore an ancient ruin on a high elevation northeastward of the capital. It was

a glorious ride up rocky slopes and across rolling meadows alight with golden mustard and the scarlet blossoms of wild sweet peas.

The ruin was the remains of an ancient Christian church carved out of the living rock, possibly by the hands of some of those ancient mystics who, in days before the Crusades, went out into the desert places to spend their lives in pious works and meditation. They believed their work would endure forever, and truly it was as old as the hills; yet, though we marked clearly the transept, the nave, and the chancel, the roof had fallen in places, the roots of large trees tore at the crumbling rocks, and a rich luxuriance of creepers hastened its decay. Standing on this ruin, on one side below us in a glorious vista swept the vale of Shoa, radiant in the light of the sinking sun. But the Major and the young Consul General urged me to look behind, and there in the distance they pointed out the slope near Silti, where the Negus, like a hawk, was poised waiting for the right moment to throw himself upon the Shoans; while down in the intervening valleys we saw small encampments, and tardy horsemen travelling northward to lift a lance for the cause. It

struck me then what a strange tableau was here.

Christians we were, of the modern age; yet we stood upon the ruins of a Christian church built before the dark ages and looked down upon Christian warriors going to war against the forces of Islam, calling on St. Gabriel and St. George, exactly as did their co-religionists of mediæval times—three great ages linked together. And to one side, with red and white pennons fluttering from the tips of their lances, stood two turbaned Sikhs with the reins of the horses upon their arms, imperturbable as the East that brought them forth, saying nothing, merely looking on.

We rode back before the shadows fell. . . .

At about three o'clock in the morning the invaders began to stir. Hot is the blood that lusts for battle two hours before the dawn. Yet before the naked sun rose from its eastern couch of sand, large bodies of warriors were moving through the dew-drenched meadows of the uplands. At first a silence hung over the cold, misty country, broken only by the gasping laughter of an hyena, and then by the dull rumble of the war-drums whose deep notes pulsed through the night like throbbing blood in

the ear. The heart seemed to beat unconsciously in rhythm with the sound, feeling the same suffocating thrill that comes at the first echo of distant cannon. It called for action.

Driven on by the sound, the white companies drifted through the darkness like bands of ghosts, over the rolling meadows, along the gentle vales, with an occasional clank of arms, a whispered command sternly given, the startling snort of a pony, or the blind rush of some wild creature surprised in its covert. Then to the eastward, where *Ras* Omar was closing in on the Shoan flank, there came the snap of rifles, the swish and hammer of hoofs as horses charged in the night, and the battle was on.

Negus Mikael's plan was simple and determined. Both flanks of the Shoans were to be turned in upon the centre, and at the same time a frontal attack was to be directed against the main camps. On the wings it required several hours' marching to bring the warriors in contact, but at the centre less than half a mile separated the contending forces, so that all seemed to come in contact at once.

The guns went into action immediately, spitting and striking blindly in the darkness; while

the mitrailleuses sputtered as uselessly from their uncertain posts. This was a vain show, and a form of warfare hateful to the warriors. With shouts and cries they rushed forward, seeking to come to grips with their opponents.

Ras Omar's impetuous followers, striking the scattered forces of the *Betodded* Haile Guirgious with a sweeping rush, seemed to carry all before him, forcing the old chieftain back upon his centre, fighting desperately to prevent a complete turning movement.

While *Ras* Omar thus seemed to be carrying all before him, *Dedjatch* Tadela, followed by all the forces of the Negus Mikael, advanced in a straight frontal attack, and threw himself with great ferocity upon the very camp of *Ras* Demissie, in the Shoan centre, and by the sheer shock of the encounter overthrew the Shoans and sent them reeling back upon the camp of *Fitaorari* Apte Guirgious. Continuing on with unabated impetuosity, he actually penetrated the *Fitaorari's* encampment and came in contact with the last reserve under *Ras* Taffari. The fighting in this advance was terrific, as *Dedjatch* Tadela in his advance must have had under him about thirty thousand men, with whom he hoped

to annihilate over fifty thousand Shoans, depending for success not on any principle of tactics but upon the sheer ferocity of his men. His attack was a whirlwind of steel and flying lead; but he stirred up a second whirlwind to contend with him.

The Shoans are not brawlers and swashbucklers. They are gentle in manner, soft-spoken, affectionate, and rather inclined towards peaceful settlements, unless they become excited. The sight of blood, the sound of clashing arms, the shock of an insult, will arouse them to swift, insensate fury. When blood or honour cries for vengeance, they shriek, they howl, they leap in the air, they froth at the mouth, and rush furiously upon their adversaries determined to tear them to pieces. Imagine, then, a hundred and thirty thousand of such men, aroused to the point of desperation, flinging themselves upon each other with lances, scimitars, daggers. . . . The *Fitaorari* Apte Guirgious himself, commander-in-chief, unable to remain inactive with the clash of battle about him, though old and lame, leaped from his horse, flung his rifle away, and rushed into the torrent of the enemy with drawn sword. *Ras* Demissie, entangled in a

struggling, panting mass of warriors, was knocked from his saddle by a blow from a stick in the hands of a squire; twice was he captured and recaptured. Horsemen charged among men on foot or clashed furiously with one another; foot soldiers were involved in struggling mobs, where rifles exploded like crackers, lances swished through the air, scimitars thudded against raw-hide shields, half-naked men rolled over and over in the thick, sweet-smelling meadow grass, stabbing at each other, choking for breath, mad to kill.

While *Ras* Omar was turning the Shoans' right, and *Dedjatch* Tadela smashing their centre, *Ras* Gebri-Gzaibyer, well equipped with mitrailleuses, hit upon the idea of securing the hill, emplacing himself there, and dominating the field. Simultaneously *Ras* Demissie, of the Shoan force, despite the confusion in which he found himself, having already twice narrowly escaped destruction, was struck by the same possibility, and immediately detached men to take the hill. It was taken and retaken three times before the sun rose, and the dead about it were piled in heaps.

You must know that the sun rises early, so

that darkness quickly gave way before the golden flood that poured from the east. The pure, cool dew which was distilling from the fragrant mountain air when the sun went down, now at its rising was tinged with blood. In the light of day the struggle became fiercer. Each side knew that defeat meant annihilation. Lungs burned, muscles ached; but neither wounds nor fatigue could force them to stop. Horses, flecked in bloody froth, heaved themselves up the gentle slopes, whistling through their parched throats, and lunged down again into the nearest turmoil. Men fought in isolated groups. And all the while the drums roared and throbbed. . . .

On the eminence where his camp was pitched, the Negus Mikael, seated on his fretting horse, "Roll-Them-Up," with a tiny reserve of six or seven hundred men about him, gazed out across the field towards Koromasch. The furrow on his brow was smoothing out; his large, intelligent eyes flashed; his mobile lips parted so that his teeth glistened in his beard. He saw himself already upon the throne of Menelik. The battle was his.

Ras Omar had successfully turned the enemy's

right flank in upon its centre; and the centre was being thrust determinedly back in confusion before the fierce attack of *Dedjatch* Tadela. The decision, then, rested with the swords of *Ras* Gebri-Christos, whose object it was to turn the left flank guarded by Ligaba Bayana. . . . And here there is confusion.

Ras Gebri-Christos advanced as rapidly as *Ras* Omar on the left wing and forced action upon Ligaba Bayana, who opposed him with eight thousand men; but whether there was a struggle in which the attacker was completely repulsed, or he deliberately yielded to Ligaba Bayana, joined forces with him, and turned back upon his own leader, is not clear. In either event, however, the result would have been the same; for while this point of the battle was still in uncertainty, there suddenly appeared from the west, cutting in behind *Ras* Gebri-Christos, six thousand mounted men under *Ras* Kassa.

Suddenly, then, while his warriors were actually sweeping everything before them, and victory seemed certain, the attention of the Negus Mikael was turned westward.

From this quarter a host of horsemen was rushing upon him.

Uncertain, curious, not yet doubting that Gebri-Christos had been anything but victorious, the Negus and his bodyguard moved slowly forward to meet this advance. They strained their eyes to identify the leader. Some one recognised *Ras* Gebri-Christos. Immediately the Negus believed that his lieutenant had been defeated, and was hard pressed.

With a cry to his followers, he charged straight to the support of the overwhelmed Christos, his few hundred warriors pressing valiantly behind him, shouting encouragement and loosening their arms. They had not gone far, however, when a word was shrieked in the uproar that suddenly stilled the shouts and brought the flying horses to a plunging halt.

"Treachery! Treachery!"

The Negus was stunned. He looked about him as though he had suddenly been surrounded by assassins. Some of his men were galloping furiously away to the northward. One of his *rases* pressed close to him and urged him to fly.

"The north is open. You are safe. There is no horse in Shoa that can pass the dust of 'Roll-Them-Up.'" Others cried out, "We are lost. Everything is lost. Fly! Fly!" The horses

plunged and shied. The *rases* pressed in upon their king, exhorting him to save himself. A few slipped away and fled towards Ankober.

Gradually it dawned upon the Negus that all in truth was lost, and that before him, advancing rapidly at the head of hostile horsemen, was the man his guard called traitor, his errant son-in-law. A shadow settled upon his countenance, his brows drew down ominously, his eyes gleamed with a cruel concentration, and he fixed his gaze on Christos. At that moment he must have tasted the dregs of bitterness. He had fought to redeem the honour of a son whom a nation had scorned, and now at the moment of victory he was about to be crushed by the man who had scorned his daughter.

Suddenly, without shifting his gaze, he urged "Roll-Them-Up" forward. The good horse leaped like a startled kudu, and rushed straight upon the advancing horsemen. The Negus fired three shots at Christos, wounding him. Then he was seized and overthrown; yet heedless of any one else, in a cold frenzy, the king still struggled desperately to get near enough to Christos to plunge a knife into him. . . .

This ended the battle.

Dedjatch Tadela and *Ras* Gebri-Gzaibyer, having attacked without supports, were hopelessly surrounded. Only *Ras* Omar, the Mussulman, left the field in safety, his untiring warriors streaking away to the northward, slashing back at the heavy pursuit of the weary horsemen from the west.

The struggle had lasted until almost noon; and the actual dead upon the field certainly numbered over fourteen thousand.

The thunder of the war-drums died away. The tumult was stilled. Over the field went warriors, plucking trophies from the slain; and after them the camp followers and the neighbouring peasants to strip the dead and pillage among the wounded. The victory was complete. . . .

Already in every copse the ravens croaked, and high in the clear blue heavens black dots showed the vultures were coming.

Peace settled over the country.

The Victorious Shoan Army Marching About Fifty Thousand Strong Before the Empress Zeoditou After Destroying *Ras* Mikael's Invading Army a Few Days Previously Beyond the Hills.

The Franco-Ethiopian Railway, the Principal Outlet of Abyssinia, and the Only Practical Means of Conquering the Desert Girt Empire.

III. Triumph of Zeoditou, Daughter of Menelik

A HAZE seems to spread itself over all my actions and the impressions I formed of the swiftly moving events of that month, a haze similar to that which lends mystic enchantment to a mediæval romance. Exact details are dissolved in a general romantic impression. I recall in a peculiar jumble the perfume of flowers, a cool strong wind sighing through cypress-like eucalyptus trees, knightly warriors riding away at dawn down dim rutted lanes with squires and hostlers at the heels of their horses, and women at the smoky doors of thatched huts crying loving farewells and calling down on them the blessings of God and the intercession of the Virgin. I remember the sound of galloping horses at night, a leper's bell tinkling in the market place, a dark ford where robbers lay in ambush, a ride against time in the dusk of evening on a foaming black horse with a bearded cavalryman at my shoulder with pennoned lance at rest, a

gibbet at the cross-roads, and the rasping of malefactors' bodies swung by the moaning breezes of night against the bark of road-side trees. But above all there is a vivid memory of a brilliant field of honour, where conquering warriors careered on richly caparisoned horses before the silken tent of their empress, and enchained prisoners made obeisance to the valiant Might that had overthrown them. . . .

Lounging one evening within the walls of my host's compound, carrying on a desultory conversation with a Greek hunter in a language that was mongrel, we waited with unconscious expectancy for some new event. The soft silence of eventide was about us. Ravens croaked malignantly under the garden wall, and the ruminating camels grumbled in reply. All at once we heard a rifle shot. Instantly a fusillade broke out from the direction of the royal *Guebi*. The sound ran like fire over the wooded hills of the capital; rifles exploded at our very gate; cannon hammered at the sky. In another moment we were in the midst of bedlam.

An Arab ran to the gate and barred it. The occupants of the compound stared at each other dazed, anxious. All armed themselves with

rifles, pikes, and swords. Had the Negus come? If so, we were lost.

The Greek tried to explain to me; but our languages were too mixed for sudden speech. So then he swung up on his little horse. Ordering the gate to be opened, he turned to me, grinned, said "Chin-chin," and rode away. I knew then that good news had come from Silti, and as he turned away in the direction of the Guebi, I made off on foot to the market place.

The brown naked expanse of the market place was filled with flying figures. Reckless riders galloped at breakneck pace over rough ground, leaping the furrows and ditches as though they were nothing but ruts, waving their rifles about their heads, and firing at random. Unmounted soldiers squatted comfortably on their haunches, and pumped their rifles at an empty sky. Women thrust their heads out of doors and cried in tremulous voices for news. Panting clusters of squires and attendants chased like mad after the flying masters they were supposed to escort. Curs came leaping joyously out of every alleyway, yelping without restraint, and then went racing silently back with lumps of

lead whipping the dust about them; for such a thing as a blank cartridge is unknown in Ethiopea. Squat, bow-legged slaves, grinning delightedly one moment, looking ghastly serious the next, blundered about on tardy errands, or took hasty shelter in the nearest huts. I passed a woman who was wailing over her son who had just been hit; and indeed it is a wonder more of us were not down, for the pellets were slapping freely in the dust about us. Many, of course, were wounded; but the piper was not over-paid.

The last echo of the cannon rolled against the hills; and then in rapid diminuendo the rifle shots died away, until silence again fell over the city; and darkness seemed to sink softly over the happy villages. Though I strained my ears there was no sound to arouse a second thought, save the tinkling bell of the Faceless One at the cross-roads.

Surprised at the sudden cessation of the shooting, which is as much an expression of an Abyssinian's joy as is the song of the Swahili, I wandered further. All human life seemed to have been sucked into the thatched dwellings, where alone sounds of subdued revelry could be heard. Then I found there were guards sta-

tioned along all the main roads, dusty, weary guards, but grim; and it might have been a lonely night for me had I not met the Greek hunter returning; and so we managed to get through.

He told me, now that we could frame our words at leisure, that *Dedjatch* Baltcha, the eunuch, had taken the capital in hand. This, I knew, meant order; for Baltcha is one of the sternest figures I have ever encountered. He is so strangely unlike the general conception of a eunuch that I should certainly believe him to be false,—like Li, the wily paramour of the Empress of China,—but no breath of scandal rests against his fame. Austere, cold, passionless in his heart's desires, nevertheless he moves with swift and deadly precision, adhering strictly to the course of right as he understands right. Believing in God with the intimacy of a fanatic, and fearing Him above all things, he has no timidity for all the airy bluster of puny man.

Lidj Yassou, the deposed Prince, enraged once by Baltcha's criticism, threatened to take from him his titles, his power, his fortune.

"And so," concluded the surly youth, "beware. Do not forget I am your monarch."

Baltcha replied scornfully:

"And what of that? Do you think I am a fawning courtier, fearing to lose the paltry chattels that are now called mine? I have had too much of life to value any part of it beyond its worth, and its worth is nothing. So far from trembling at your threat, I gladly would renounce all that I have, if I might only go back to my monastery to spend my remaining years in meditation. This trumpery vanishes. Remember, boy, all that is worth living for is to grow more intimate with God."

And now when the weak-minded Prince was mumbling with hopeless misery in some desert retreat, the eunuch sat within the palace walls and planned a triumph for his successor; no simple review, or reception of chieftains, but a parade upon a field of honour such as bards would sing of in the rustic *tokhuls,* and returning warriors would glorify in the village squares. This man's every act arouses my admiration, but his genius for organisation, the rich poetry of his imagination, the despatch with which he worked are beyond my praise. He handled men and warriors and Princes in tens and hundreds and thousands as though they were tinselled

puppets upon a paper stage. For him the glory of the achievement meant nothing; but he knew that royalty—and particularly the royalty of a parvenu—must shine resplendent to dazzle each subject's eyes.

Upon the fourth day after the valiant Negus threw himself away in a blind effort to avenge himself upon a traitor, and his invincible army had been crumpled by the forces of Shoa, he was marched on foot and in chains to the pavilion of the new Empress and forced to humble himself in the presence of fifty thousand Shoan warriors and a multitude of spectators.

Early in the morning my horse was ready for me, and with my two French friends I rode through the villages that lie from the capital out to eastward where a clear greensward plain, a hollow in the palm of the hills, had been prepared to stage the triumph. As we made our way along, we found the broad highways and narrow lanes thronged with the populace going forth to view the spectacle. Soldiers, chieftains, and great *rases,* on foot, on mule, or cantering on arch-necked steeds, some with a solitary follower or two, like the bearded cross-bowmen of

yore, some with well armed vassals, some with companies of cavalrymen on curveting horses with drummers and trumpeters trotting behind on mules. Ecclesiastics, with flowing white beards spreading over their chests and coloured parasols protecting their heads from too ardent a celestial benediction, tripped by on donkeys; and the large mass of the people footed it in the dust, or took position on the high banks by the roadside to watch the colourful stream of humanity pour by.

Two things were noticeable. There were no pedlars with sweetmeats and bottled drinks; and it may be that the far-sighted Baltcha had ruled against them. Also, in all the throng there was no boisterousness. On the contrary the greetings were soft and gentle; and none jostled his neighbour unduly. For this there was a reason, as D'Artagnan might have told. You do not jostle, unthinkingly, a musketeer armed *cap-à-pie*. This I had already learned when once, beyond the market place, my frettish horse had almost got beyond control.

Turning into a short-cut, which we had used before, we left the flowing crowd behind us and reached the vast meadow in good time for a

jump or two and a canter through the fragrant grass. The landscape alone was such as lifts the willing heart with unreasoned jubilation. Gentle hills patched with eucalyptus and juniper encompassed the plain, except where they opened to view the billowy vale of Shoa with the Mount of Monks rising dimly in the distance. The sky was blue and spacious with downy clouds to show whence came the cooling breezes; and the air was fragrant with the subtle perfume of the uplands, for the level of the plain itself was almost eight thousand feet above the sea. On all sides trees pressed in upon the meadow.

At the northern end of the plain, well in the open, a pavilion had been erected for the temporary court of the Empress Zeoditou and the Regent, *Ras* Taffari. Adjoining and forming part of the pavilion was an open extension for the reception of the Foreign Ministers. The pavilions were of brightly coloured silk, and under foot were spread rich Arab and Persian rugs, such as no Oriental would tread upon in slippered foot. The fronts of both pavilions were opened to look upon the broad sweep of the meadow. This meadow was over half a mile in length, oval, and around it ran a simple pal-

ing such as marks the inner edge of a race-course.

As we arrived, some lesser chiefs of the Empress's body-guard were taking places within the pavilion of the Foreign Ministers, and these with the Ministers themselves and their attachés and body-guards, all in full dress uniforms, and the members of their households, made in itself a spectacle of uncommon brilliancy. I know of few other places in the world where such a scene could now be enacted,—Peking, I doubt; Teheran, perhaps,—for here in apparent amity were the plenipotentiaries of Russia, Austria, Italy, France, Germany, Turkey and Great Britain, with mounted guards from Eritrea, Somaliland and the Punjaub. These bewhiskered Punjaubis, with linked mail upon their shoulders, block-like turbans adding to their lofty stature, and fluttering pennons on their lances to give point to their presence, were as solemnly at home as their brothers on the parade grounds of Delhi. They were familiar figures to me, and only as such did they catch my eye; for my attention, beyond the natural courtesies, was almost wholly taken up by the arriving *rases.*

On their feudal domains most of these men were simple warriors at peace, or even plain herdsmen, whose garments were of dirtied cotton and whose heads were crowned with battered felt hats. They had no high-sounding titles; but "Master of the Piebald Pony" or "Father of Swift-as-the-Wind" they were called, justly sharing fame with their mounts. Their dignity was in the steadiness of their eyes, their honour in the blood that beat in their hearts, their pride in their country, their glory in their God. The standards by which they were judged were tested at every phase of the moon; and no man among them had reason to doubt himself in his own heart. So they wore their robes of ceremony with simple dignity and courtly grace, as much at ease in the garments of velvet and cloth-of-gold as though seated within their *tokhuls* with homespun blankets across their shoulders.

So they appeared. But beneath the calm of their brown, weathered faces no doubt there were depths stirred by profoundest emotions. This was the most glorious event of their lives. No courtier of a Louis ever felt greater pride in royalty than they in the Empress they had just created. And as I watched, I perceived that

they were not stoic to their environment. They edged for place; they eagerly sought the opportunity for a word or two with greater chieftains who could approach the throne; slaves and pages wriggled a way through to whisper messages behind their ear, and were sent rushing away on further errands; their composure was often broken by the sight of old friends, and effusive greetings were exchanged in courtly style. Clutching the hilts of their jewelled scimitars they bowed low; they seized each other's hands; they embraced. In fact all about me stirred those numberless little courtesies and harmless whispered intrigues which lend to the imperial sham an air of substance and reality.

In the meantime the plain began to blaze with colour like a field of flowers bursting with bloom, with petals scattered willy-nilly. First came the high priests in resplendent robes, with gorgeous umbrellas over their heads, trotting along on sleek ecclesiastical mules, recalling the days when the Pope was in Tours, and took their position opposite the Empress's pavilion, leaving a space a hundred yards in width, so that the review might pass between. Their retainers

lined the paling on either side of their masters, and though they were of no particular rank, the thick sheepskins they wore upon their shoulders, dyed in violent colours, irresistibly suggested a row of monstrous chrysanthemums. No sooner were the priests settled than a murmur arose about me, eyes were turned to the westward, and there, issuing from an opening in the woods, came the Empress and her followers. There was no cheering, no applause; everybody was silent with astonishment.

Covered with a plain black silk cloak, with neck and face muffled in snowy linen, so that only her eyes showed, and upon her head a broad-brimmed felt hat, she seemed to have hit by instinct upon the nobility of simplicity. Close about her were several ladies-in-waiting, similarly dressed, and all mounted on mules. But surrounding her, and spreading far on either side, came such a multitude as I have rarely seen—a torrent of sandalled, white-clad humanity, mostly soldiers, armed with shields, rifles, bandoleers, and scimitars. And this wave bore her down upon us, deposited her at the entrance to her pavilion, and then broke and

swirled in independent eddies about the course until driven back into position by horsemen charging boldly into the press.

At the entrance to the pavilion the great *rases* came forward, such as were not at the head of their warriors—and with deep bows greeted the Empress and escorted her to her dais within. There was a momentary confusion in our pavilion, the members of the body-guard pressing forward for a better view of Menelik's daughter, while the last eddies of the mob swirled along the edge of the tent. At this moment I heard a subdued, startled murmur behind me:

"Baltcha! Baltcha!"

Turning my head, I saw the philosophic hawk stalking down the line of *rases,* striking coldly, imperiously, with his long staff at the heads and shoulders of those who did not promptly fall back to make way for him. I held my breath, expecting them to seize upon him and rend him; but they made way before the black-clad figure, wincing and pushing forward their shoulders as he struck at them. In their eyes was the fear and pride of a dog struck lightly by its master.

Bitodded Haile Guirgious, Minister of the In-

terior, then came to tell us the Empress was ready to receive us. I had already met the *Bitodded,* a noble figure of manhood, large, firm in build, with the countenance of a great leader. His features were small and clean-cut; a short, crisp beard gave dignity to his countenance; and his far-seeing eye, set beneath a lofty brow, indicated a deep intelligence and great reserve.

"He is anxious," my companion breathed in my ear. "He may yet hang. They have not forgot that he was the favourite of the Prince."

"He keeps his feet," I observed, as I watched him make his way to the side of the Empress's dais.

"Ah, yes. He knows where to land. The trouble is he is too bright."

I thought with amusement of Cæsar's, "Have men about me who are fat;" for at the Empress's shoulder was the dark ascetic countenance of Baltcha, pinched, thin-lipped, with high arched nose and shadowy eyes, like the mummy of Rameses.

We paid our respects to the Empress, who remained veiled to her eyes; but this glimpse seemed sufficient to betray a character that was

gentle, sympathetic, unspoiled either by weak vanity or vain cynicism. No sooner had this preliminary reception ended than an uproar burst forth in the space before the pavilion, and there, cavorting upon the green, was the court fool. He came as a warrior, burlesquing with timely ridicule the boasted achievements of the fighting men.

In his head-dress was a bunch of grass to mock the gallants who wear a sprig of green to show they have killed their man; and around his girdle were the mantles of his slain. Flinging himself upon the ground, he crawled on his stomach to within thirty feet of the throne, aiming his rifle, and shouting "bang" to punctuate his tale. Leaping to his feet, he whirled a scimitar about his head, charged imaginary enemies, and shrieked in panting accents how he had saved the throne by killing ten thousand men at Silti. One of the court attendants, dressed simply in white, and armed with nothing more than a staff, unimpressed by the general laughter, finally stepped forward, touched him with the staff, and bade him begone. Scarcely had he run aside, screaming defiance, than with a muffled hammer of hoofs the first of the re-

turning warriors bore down in a wild stampede upon the pavilion.

It was a sight to lift the heart, to make one rise in his stirrups stiffened with sheer thrill. At the head, on a richly caparisoned horse, whose coat of gold and silver filigree on blue cloth swept the grass, came the first *ras* in rich robes of gold and purple, with a lion's mane for a cape, and a head-dress made from the tufts of lions' tails. On his left arm he bore a round shield of brown suede leather overlaid with hammered gold, while round and round his head his keen scimitar hissed, as his horse curveted and made *fantasia* before the throne. Pressing at his heels in a wild riot of colour came the screaming warriors of Shoa, brandishing rifles and lances, with their ponies plunging and shying amid a tangle of weapons and cloaks draped from their necks and saddle cruppers—trophies of war, taken but five days since from the invaders from the North. The final act of the *ras* was to fling himself from his horse, to rush to the edge of the pavilion, shouting of his deeds, loudly proclaiming his undying loyalty, and then to sink quietly in a solemn genuflection before the Empress.

She hardly noticed him, for already a second company was charging up the course, and the stern attendant in white waved the first *ras* aside. Yet that moment was the supreme moment of his life. He had come fresh from the battle-field, flushed with victory, and in the presence of all the valiant ones of Shoa, his valour had been proclaimed.

To us cynics of a soft and cynic land, jaded with luxury, callous with self-sufficiency, victims of bathos, yet unimpressionable to realities, such a spectacle is nothing more than a spectacle —a circus parade, worth so much a head. But it was infinitely more. The earnestness, the abandon, the nervous frenzy which seemed to agitate these warriors as they shouted of their deeds, then sank in calm obeisance before their monarch, seemed to me to hold all the significance of the salute of Napoleon's cuirassiers at Austerlitz. As I watched the companies charge by, with clashing arms, and songs, and frantic shouts, I remembered this: that in all Africa there remains to-day but this one independent nation, that that nation was strong and independent and Christian centuries before the Crusaders laid siege to Acre, and that if Ethiopea

had ever fallen before Islam, even as Nubia fell, Great Britain probably would not hold Egypt to-day, and Africa might still be dark from Omdurman to Delagoa Bay.

Fifty thousand men or more must have passed before us. That number comes within my reckoning. And all these men were warriors of the first class, though they represented but a small proportion of the nation's resources; and every one had fought hand to hand in battle.

Full in the van came *Fitaorari* Apte Guirgious, the greatest of the *rases*. A quarter of an hour before his contingent reached the pavilion, his war drums heralded his approach. There were more than thirty of them, with the drummers mounted on mules, and it was hard to say when the vibrations first reached the ear, for they grew from a whisper to a pulsing roar without any apparent transition. The sound stirred the blood, and set the nerves to tingling until it was almost impossible not to leap in the air and shout. Before the drummers strode other musicians who blew on long horns that blared like Manchu trumpets. The uproar seemed to fill the air with the high tension that comes before a tempest; and to accentuate this

impression there suddenly appeared a singing woman, shouting random snatches of warlike songs and soldiers' ballads.

The *Fitaorari* conducted himself with restraint. The solemn dignity of a very great chief rested upon him, and he advanced slowly, his excited horse stepping daintily and chafing at the bit, as he faced the pavilion. Instead of the popular lion's mane, the Minister of War had over his shoulders a cloak of otter skins, while rising from the chaplet that bound his head was a soft ostrich plume, the rare Wallo badge of royalty. In the momentary silence when the *Fitaorari* faced the Empress, suddenly there came from the multitude a spontaneous burst of applause; and this was extraordinary, for until that moment there had been no cheer, nor rifle shot, nor shout of approbation. It was one of those strange occasions when the crowd is dominated by the spectacle. The warriors required no acclamation from the mob. Even the *Fitaorari's* ovation started in the tent of the foreign Ministers.

Following the *Fitaorari* came old ***Ras*** Demissie, looking, with his broad white beard upon his chest and green parasol over his head, for all

the world like a distinguished prelate. His robes were as resplendent as an archbishop's, and instead of indulging in the *fantasia* of youths, he merely bowed with solemn gravity. Yet this was the man who had supported the right flank, helped to beat off the furious onslaught of *Ras* Omar, and after repeated attempts carried the central hill.

In strong contrast to this old warrior was Lies Gesta, straight and young, who had just succeeded to the honours of his father. Riding his horse almost into the Empress's pavilion, he cried out:

"My men are scattered, and the strength of my father is gone; but as for me, O Daughter of Menelik, my Empress, I pledge my arm and my honour to you."

Thus the *rases* made obeisance, and pledged their loyalty; but they were merely the leaders of wave after wave of loyal warriors, warriors on foot, on mule, on horseback. These masses of men charged furiously upon the pavilion, clashing their arms, shouting, screaming, twirling scimitars about their heads, brandishing their rifles. In the heat of their excitement they pantomimed the events of the battle, and the

heroic deeds they performed. Bearded old warriors with flashing eyes danced madly before the assembled court, all consciousness of themselves lost in a passion of enthusiasm. Younger men, aspiring to high favour, rushed almost to the foot of the throne, hoping that the Empress would be impressed by their prowess. Whole companies of lesser chiefs charged with a roar of hoofs to within twenty-five feet of the royal dais, then brought their mounts back on their haunches, plunging and shying amid a tangle of accoutrements and trophies.

Standing before the pavilion were two men in white robes. These were the guardians of the steps to the throne. Armed with thin staffs and nothing more, they checked the wild impetuosity of warriors and kept the torrent of horsemen within bounds. Cold and unflinching, they budged not a hair's breadth in the face of charges that might well have broken a British square. On their faces were stern frowns of concentration; and except to cry sharply, "Stop," or "Pass on," they seldom spoke. Nothing escaped them. A *ras,* overestimating his own dignity and seeking to join the chieftains assembling within the

pavilion, was ordered away by them as peremptorily as a presumptuous hostler, while some unpretentious old man would be given a place of honour. They knew everybody, and understood the finest shades of court precedence; yet there was an ease, a graceful simplicity in their manner that disarmed any suspicion of arrogance. Only once did they give way for any advancing dignitary; and this was when the *Abouna* Petrus, the Coptic pontiff elevated by the Negus Mikael, came before the throne as a prisoner.

Pale, weary, and anxious, his cream-coloured skin and silky white beard made him conspicuous among the dusky Abyssinians. He wore a robe of black, and came on a led mule to the front of the pavilion, where he dismounted slowly and heavily and advanced towards the dais with God only knows what doubts and misgivings. The multitude strained forward to witness the reception. He was a great prelate. Would the throne dare to consider him a traitor? And, if so, what fate awaited him? But the *Abouna* Petrus, lifting his eyes, saw that he was looked upon graciously by the pious and for-

giving Empress; and the prelates came forward and embraced him, and escorted him to a place of honour opposite the pavilion.

To me it seemed like a dream, the vision of an animated tapestry of Bayeaux, showing the valour of a chivalrous nation sweeping by in every rich and royal colour, with a background of Nile-green hills under a blue and downy sky. At the same time it was not possible to forget that these were fighting men, fresh from the field of battle, men whom I might some day encounter. The trailing trophies told the tale; but more to the point were the rifles, the mitrailleuses, and the mountain guns neatly packed on mule back. The heavy guns were not on show; they were parked about the *Guebi*. Moreover, from *Ras* Kassa's well-organised men—some of whom had fought as volunteers against the Turks in Tripoli—to the tangle of Galla horsemen brandishing their lances, there flamed a spirit of valour that had never been dulled by defeat. In the light of their fanaticism, it struck me how doubly fortunate was the fact of their Christianity, and the chastening effect of Kitchener's blow at the Mahdi at Omdurman.

It chanced that Ligaba Bayana stood by me,

so I formed more than a passing impression of his garments. His head-dress was formed of the tufts from lions' tails, fastened at the base with rich silver filigree on a silken turban of green and yellow with streamers flowing down behind. Upon his shoulders was the customary lion's mane, caught at the front with a jewelled clasp. This cloak was attached to a mantle of golden velvet richly embroidered with silver thread; while the long undercoat was of scarlet embroidered in gold. His long, slim, sweeping scimitar was encased in a scabbard of purple velvet edged with gold, and gemmed at the hilt. He bore the weight of this gorgeous apparel with ease and grace, his sturdy body, his dusky countenance and stern steady eyes giving ample dignity to the garish richness of his garments.

It was a strange sight to see his contingent advancing, bearing aloft religious emblems, the staff and crucifix, and the banners of St. George and St. Gabriel; but more impressive still was the sight of the prisoners. Like the burghers of Calais, gowned in black, with chains about their wrists and necks, and bearing stones upon their shoulders, these illustrious chieftains of yesterday passed by humbly on foot with bowed

heads. There were only a few, for beyond the Mediterranean and the Caucasus prisoners are an unnecessary nuisance, unless they be worthy of ransom; though I must affirm that on this occasion a striking leniency had been shown, the bulk of the prisoners being sent back to their homes, unmolested.

Last of all came the Negus himself.

A week before, the timid souls of the capital who had looked northward into the night at the shimmering lightning behind Entoto and listened to the ominous roll of distant thunder, envisioned the Negus holding his ravening thousands in leash upon the slopes of Silti before sweeping forward into the city. They imagined him coming with flame and scimitar, amid the thunder of hoofs, and the shouts of ruthless conquerors. They had trembled at his approach. . . . And now he was at hand. The pulsing roar of the *Fitaorari's* drums and the tramping and champing of fretful horses filled the air with a tumult, but the crowd, fastening its eyes upon the approaching Negus, fell silent.

The escort spread away before him, and there in the open space was disclosed the dread Abou Tekelel, "Father of Roll-Them-Up," the Negus

Mikael. In black, with a band of white about his head, and chained by the wrist to a lesser *ras* of Harrar, he came forward, limping slightly, to the very edge of the tent. Who knows what weight of grief, what agony of shame bore down upon him? He thought of his weak minded and disgraced son; of the treacherous Gebri-Christos; of his own ruthless and determined effort to disrupt his country, the ancient land of his forefathers; and he knew that all was lost, that his long lineage had come to a disgraceful and complete end. He who had been king but yesterday was nothing; and his son was less than nothing. His noble features, grizzled beard, and the stern, anxious expression of his countenance inspired instant respect and sympathy; so that many for the moment forgot the suffering he had brought to others. Yet there were hundreds in that assemblage who would have dared to speed a bullet or plunge a knife into his heart were it not for the cold vigilance of Baltcha.

Approaching the throne, he cast a swift, comprehensive glance from under his frowning eyebrows at the men who supported it—kindred, brothers in arms, *rases* who had stood with him

at the bedside of Menelik and pledged their honour to uphold the old Emperor's choice . . . the wandering Lidj Yassou. Then he sank on his knee before the Empress, sister of his wife. A gesture, a nod, a look of compassion from her, might have meant the salvation of his family.

She averted her eyes. Rising slowly to his feet, the fallen Negus turned about, glanced absently here and there, as though he were lost, and was borne away like a fallen leaf in the torrent of warriors that poured westward. . . .

My companion whispered in my ear:

"It is virtually over. Let us go now while we have the opportunity. Do not forget that we are engaged for tiffin!"

It was almost two o'clock. We had been standing since early morning. But we waited to meet *Ras* Taffari, Regent, successor to Lidj Yassou; and I marked with pleasure the smiling alertness of this new ruler of Ethiopea. Slim, bearded like a Spaniard, slightly sallow, his countenance alight with intelligence and good will, he augured well for the future of his country.

We made our farewells, swung into saddle, and threaded our way rapidly through that great

jumbled multitude, until we reached an open lane, when we broke into a gallop. For tiffin with M. Hallot in his rose-embowered bungalow, set in a grove of eucalyptus, with a murmuring stream beside it, is not an event to be lightly forgotten . . . though Princes fall, and empires totter.

The following night, muffled against the sudden chill, we mounted our ponies, said farewell to the little group in the compound yard, and in another minute were scampering through the darkness down the rough rocky declivity that formed the chief exit from the capital. Our Arab guide rode a splendid horse, and he pushed our mounts to the limit over deep-rutted roads, around thorn-hedged *zarebas,* past smoky huts, until we struck the open plain. Then, heedless of all danger from water-pits, surprises, or sharp-cut *dongas,* we went loping away under the stars. . . .

Es-Sawahil

THERE is a saying that the most glorious view of Aden is to be had from the stern of the vessel which bears you away. I believe that is substantially correct; though, in truth, I did not linger over the view at all, save for one backward glance at the Cyclopean wink of the baleful beacon on Ras Morbit by which Great Britain links up its empire—one last look in the darkness before our ship swung out for Cape Guardafui, to skim the bleak Horn of Africa.

With an inexpressible sense of freedom and content, I wiped the cindery dust from my eyes, and turned my blossoming thoughts to the white coral shores and green groves of Mombasa.

The ship was one of the noble ancients of the Messageries Maritimes, full of character and barnacled memories.

"On the Company's books," I was told, "it is valued at about seven francs! You see, it worked off its original cost twenty years ago!" . . .

Long, black, and narrow, with but a single deck, broken by sky-lights, and rakish masts designed for canvas, it preserved all the characteristics of those early liners to the Far East upon which Chan Ok, the pirate of the China Sea, used to prey. Its sisters have gone down enmeshed in nets of West River junks strung on hawsers of Manila hemp, while yellow men swarmed out of the mists, up the careening sides, and through the square, window-like ports. This memory may seem distant, yet we know well enough that a broken propellor-shaft might promise a similar fate for us upon the point of the Horn, off our starboard bow.

Here, several months before, a British commissioner in a gunboat came to inquire into the loss of a trading vessel. The nearest chief received him in primitive state, seated in an armchair, and leaning on his elbows with a bored expression. He denied all knowledge of the wreck; yet the very chair he sat upon had come from the captain's cabin!

Our ship was a ship to travel in!

Cows lowed in pens, and sheep and poultry added to the farm-yard aspect of the quarter-deck. The cook had a kitchen garden in the

galley; and geraniums grew in a window-box in the steward's cuddy.

The captain, a portly and jovial man, paraded the deck beaming upon us all, gesticulating expansively with his long spy-glass, and entered heartily into our discussion when expressed in language he could comprehend. On the night before our arrival in Mombasa harbour, when a small British company gathered about him, mellow and merry, and toasted him with full cups, roaring into the soft tropical darkness their conviction that "he was a jolly good fellow," he was visibly affected. Not understanding the words, he instinctively felt that they fitted the occasion, so he took the lead; and waving his glass in gentle rhythm above his head, with an expression mingled of melancholy and poetic resignation, his rubicund face looking for all the world like the picture of a sanctimonious friar, he picked up the voices one by one until he brought out in one pandemonic roar the fact that he *was* a jolly good fellow!

Among others, there were quiet missionary priests, dividing their time between wrinkle-browed study and merry, mock-serious games of back-gammon with the children; some sardonic

poilus returning, broken, to the colonies; a mixed lot of British officers and civilians; and the families of officials in Madagascar, Seychelles, and the Mauritius. There were a couple of pretty Belgian girls aboard, too, and a large moon accompanied us, rising with glowing countenance in true romantic style. And to cap it, there was an infatuated young Englishman. He had no logical right to be infatuated. But he couldn't help it; and he suffered spasms of silence when the roguish Belgian maid who had made roast meat of his heart turned her glistening eyes at others. . . .

There was a following sea, and we swept down the long coast without startling incident, enjoying the calm procession of sunny days, the fresh whisper of the sea about our sides, and the noisome, colourful circus of the sailors and their wives and mothers and aunts and offspring which the fo'c's'le held for us.

Every race and colour of Africa swarmed up forward; but, unlike the lascar-crewed ships of the British merchant marine, Africa was actually in the ascendancy. *Tarbushes* of every height and colour, crowning black, fuzzy heads, took the place of turbans and white skull caps.

Mombasa, the Entrepot for British East Africa, Presents a Mixture of Civilization and Savagery Typifying the East Coast.

Itinerant Witch Doctors in the Lake District.

It seemed almost as though the ship had an object in collecting human specimens from Massaoua in Italian Eritrea to Seychelles and Madagascar. Slim, handsome Somali types of the north blended in all degrees with the heavier, more powerful Bantu stock from the south.

To one whose imagination can swing a bridge across the gaps that history is so slow in filling with connected facts, this long and silent coast, low-lying under a dazzling sun, presents a mass of scenes romantic and significant stretching far back into antiquity.

Somaliland, cut into spheres of influence—an influence that is only gingerly exercised—stretching from the Red Sea almost to Mombasa, in British East Africa, is divided among France, Great Britain, and Italy. The small ports are little better than open roads, with small fortified garrison posts as protection against native surprise. The Juba river, near the boundary of Somaliland and British East Africa, land of the Gallas, recently the scene of a massacre of white settlers characterising the lawless unrest in the unsubdued savage land back of the Benadir coast, is the first river to empty into the sea south of Port Said. A stretch of almost three thou-

sand miles of coast without a river; and the Juba itself is obstructed by a bar and is navigable only by small craft! South of the Juba there is only one other stream, the Tana, before Mombasa is reached; but then the moist, rich Equatorial coast commences, with a goodly number of small streams and small but well-protected harbours.

The coast from Lamu, at the mouth of the Tana, southward, including the maritime plain of British East Africa, German East Africa (off whose coast lies Zanzibar), and Portuguese East Africa, is rich and wet and rank with the luxuriance of tropical verdure. It is a land of great promise. But inland there is greater promise still; for the land rises in great ridges and plateaus clear back to central Africa where the chain of great lakes, forming the headwaters of the Nile, the Congo, and the Zambesi, lie. For this country, Mombasa has become the natural *entrepôt,* in competition with Dar-es-Salaam, the German port of entry below Zanzibar.

Mombasa is ancient; and it has been the scene of many bloody conflicts between natives and invaders, but more particularly between the Arabs and the Portuguese, who struggled long for its

possession until the Imams of Muscat finally gained the ascendancy, and the red Mahometan banner flew over the great Portuguese citadel that still looks out upon the Indian Ocean.

A railroad runs from Mombasa to Victoria Nyanza, and great agricultural centres are growing along this artery; while at the lake end there is a port from which steamers make the tour of the entire inland coast. Uganda, the inland kingdom, has been touched with its magic and shows it in every phase of its life. Automobiles are in more general use in the larger towns of Uganda than in North China. . . .

Mombasa's present importance lies in its harbour and its railroad. It is a commercial centre. Big business is being developed here in a near-up-to-date manner. Steamships and railroads combine to give the place an air of bustle. There is a large club run on a commercial basis; several hotels and rooming-houses; a couple of struggling cinema houses; a boat club, a tennis club, a golf links; large European stores; and taxi-cabs. It is an island of coral formation, with a coat of green through which tiled and corrugated-iron roofs are thrust. The main streets are broad and white and glare in the

humid sunlight; the sea-front bustles with activity; and the bazaars hum with business.

There is much about it that is beautiful, that awakens the imagination, that quickens the pulse. But, essentially, it is a place to pass through! It is a gate to the great country that spreads away inland with all the wonder of savage Africa in its arms; it is a gate to the open sea through which the weary may escape to fresher lands!

The true romance of the coast is expressed in Zanzibar. . . .

One evening, shortly after my arrival in Mombasa, the young infatuated Englishman invited me to go riding in the moonlight in a motorcar which he had borrowed for the occasion. I thought the invitation curious, until he blurted out the explanation that he was taking the Belgian maid, too, and she insisted upon a chaperon. She said that I would qualify. . . . I very tactfully occupied the front seat with the Goanese driver, and we sailed about the island over dim, smooth coral roads over which bent great mango trees dripping with large, juicy fruit, large as small melons, juicy as overripe tomatoes! We ran close to the shore, so that the murmur of the sea whispered in our ears; the moon soared over

the sea; the night, soft and balmy, seemed to hold its breath with an almost overwhelming intensity of emotion. Suddenly I heard the infatuated Englishman break the tremulous silence:

"Oh, ma cherie," he whispered tenderly, with an agony of yearning in his voice. *"Ma cherie. Je t'aime! . . . Je t'aime! . . . Je t'aime! . . . Je . . .* Oh, damn! . . ."

There was the sound of a heavy blow, a suppressed scream, and then silence! I scrambled to my feet and looked back.

A ripe mango had fallen and hit the Infatuated One on the back of the neck.

That is Mombasa.

Zanzibar—The Spicy Isle

AS the Aratoon Apcar—an old acquaintance of the Bay of Bengal—drifted aimlessly into the placid roads, I suddenly learned that my table companion from Mombasa was interested in an attempt to control the sisal crop of British East Africa. So I missed the first expanding view of Zanzibar town; for Zanzibar was but another port, while sisal is always an adventure.

Eventually we came on deck for a glimpse of the town, congested, inchoate, tumbled like a lot of concrete blocks on the dazzling coral beach and into the lime-like waters. The Sultan's palace, as ugly as a Saratoga hotel, obtruded itself near the centre; while dirty little alleyways ran down to the beach, where they emptied their filth into the sparkling waters among a flotsam of tatter-sail dhows coasting from village to village with cargoes of *berities, makanda* mats, cloves, coral blocks, and copra. A few broad-verandaed piles hung over the sands, while right

and left a skyline of palms, thrust above a solid dark green base, indicated the rich, tropical verdure that is characteristic of this isle of spice and romance.

To seaward some tiny islands were scattered like bits of polished jade upon a tray of ruffled, stained, sky-blue velvet; while in the offing the skeleton of a wreck bleaching on its rack of jagged coral gave the lie to the music of the waves whispering and licking about it.

I looked quizzically at the sisal man.

"No fear," he said wearily. "I'm fed up with niggers. I want to see nothing between here and Durban. My soul is satisfied with what it's seen of black Africa. Give me one-quarter per cent. on my turn-over, and I'll camp on Jermyn Street for the rest of my life. Besides," he added plaintively, "there's nothing here but spice and pestilence."

With this ringing in my ears, I went overboard and sought the shore alone, since no one had come to meet me.

Aden, from which I had but recently departed, is a man grown gaunt and rugged in honest strife; but Zanzibar is a courtesan, whimsical, gay, sullen, presenting many aspects. Warm,

rich, beautiful, concealing with dissembling art its sinister spots, it lavishes its charms, intoxicates with its beauty, smothers with its opulence; or suddenly, after a smouldering silence, it rends itself with rage. The screaming tornado rips its garments of verdure to tatters, bony-fingered pestilence goes leering down its dark alleyways, fever shakes the life out of its victims. And afterwards, the bright sun sparkles upon the rain-washed foliage, and the island smiles again with the innocent radiance of a maiden. . . .

I cleared the Customs, pushing my way through a polyglot collection of Oriental and East Coast natives; and, followed by my dazed Lamu boy shouldering my bag, I plunged straight into the maze of narrow, slimy, steamy alleyways that form the thoroughfares of Zanzibar Town.

The great concrete piles of ancient Arab structures bulked overhead, closing together in places to form clumsy arches. Fronds of palms, ambitious shoots, luxuriant creepers, dripping with moisture, struggled upward to the light. The air was heavy with the rich, sweet smell of copra and the spicy tang of cloves. In and out of the huge carved doors and along the stone-paved

alleys, bland Khojas, wet looking Hindus, and Parsis, carrying umbrellas and lifting their flimsy trousers or draggling *hodrunks* from the slime, made their way from office to office on strange errands. *Hamal* carts, pushed and banged and bullied along by half-naked, sweating, singing, swearing Swahilis, filled the air with noise and confusion. Bicycle bells jangled as irritable Goanese rounded unsuspected corners; birds whistled and shrieked from the house-tops; and the muffled rattle of typewriters added a staccato to the concert. Amid this confusion I came to a black, richly carved door set in a vast mouldy wall pierced with iron-barred rifle ports, and recognised in this my factory and my castle.

A solemn black door-keeper, in white *kanza* and red *tarbush,* arose at my approach and pushed open the door; and I ascended a long, dark flight of stairs through an atmosphere stifling with the odour of spices. Half way up, these stairs gave access to my future offices, and higher still to the spacious living quarters overhanging the coral beach and looking out upon the harbour.

It was a busy day.

From dark, hidden chambers underneath came the sound of rushing feet, bursts of shrill laughter, and uproar of tumbling reed sacks of cloves and copra, the singsong chant of the tally-clerks, panting songs; from the beach, shouts of the boatmen swinging their barges close to the shore; and from the open bay the distant rattle of winches as the gluttonous ships gorged themselves with spices. The office presented a flurried aspect of scattered invoices and bills-of-lading, perspiring Parsis, and harried Banian clerks bending desperately over typewriters; while the factor, a bland little Cockney, hopped about with innocuous energy, playing the rôle of Director of the Universe.

I gave him my salaams, told him my intentions, and left him to revel in his monopoly of the American spice trade, while I retired to the seclusion of the spacious veranda overlooking the "most costly roof in East Africa," and with a woven palm basket of juicy fruit by my side, stretched myself blissfully in a long Indian chair, and smiled at the recollection of parched Aden.

Business did not immediately engross me. Certain events had transpired to fill me with a

passing cynicism. But I delighted in watching the ambitious little factor outdoing himself for my edification.

He snatched control of the clove market; he reeked of copra; he purchased a small fleet of dhows for the navigation of Victoria Nyanza; he conjured tonnage out of empty seas; he even wheedled space from the sea lords of His Britannic Majesty; he went so far as to imagine himself into a fortune based on the sale of *bêche-de-mer* to the Chinese epicures of New York and 'Frisco; and, at last, bursting with a spasm of secret patriotism, he disappeared mysteriously in a small boat for the mainland, where he assumed the rôle of soldier, serving the King in swamp and jungle against von Lettow's black men. I ran across him a year later, twittering over new plans despite his black-water fever.

He was disappointed at the lack of interest shown in his dramatic departure; but this momentary cloud faded rapidly behind a flash of new interest.

"How many engagements have you been in? I've been in nineteen! And forty goes of fever! They expect me to die, you know!"

I didn't expect him to die. I knew he

wouldn't. I hope to hear of him some day cornering the oyster crop to foster the walrus industry of Baffin's Bay. . . .

The humorous element in his departure, I must say, had been aggravated at the time by a good deal of irritation at the position in which I was left; for I was obliged to fill in nearly all my time with work, worry, and gusts of giddiness. Ships ceased calling; the "most costly roof in East Africa" converted itself into a sieve; and the little rains came on in great floods, soaking through the roof as though through sugar and pouring in upon ten thousand bales of precious spices; while a plague of rats gnawed gaping holes in every carefully weighed sack; and I began to wake to ghostly silences at night, and hear whispers in the chamber, and the waves sneering malevolently on the beach, and the stiff palm fronds cracking their knuckles, and little gusts of rain pattering over the corrugated-iron roofs and spitting in my face.

This was not good for me. One of my predecessors had gone through something similar, and he ended by wincing with physical pain every time a wave broke on the beach, and at every step forward imagined that the earth was cav-

ing in before him. Neuralgia succeeded insomnia, and insomnia succeeded neuralgia; so eventually they had to send him touring all over the world to find a place where he could sleep.

Suddenly I was tickled with a sense of the ridiculous, and the world grinned back. So I proceeded to become acquainted with my assistants and *hamals.*

The clove broker was a black-bearded Khoja, soft in speech, courteous in manner, and very clever in his dealings. He wore a long black coat, soft, floppy white linen trousers, sandals, and an umbrella; and he took a fatherly interest in my welfare, dragging me forth to peer in darksome godowns where pungent cloves were heaped in hillocks twenty-five feet high. Breathing mysterious trade secrets and exuding cloves from every seam and fold of his voluminous garments, he drifted into the office like a dark, brooding cloud touched with bits of sunshine, and never came unwanted nor stayed too long. . . .

Ali Bhanji, who scoured the steaming bazaars in the interests of Manchester looms, was also a Khoja, but of a different sort. Ali was bumptious. Ambition boiled within him. Dumpy

and Napoleonic (save that he chewed alternately a stained moustache and betel nut packed in lime), he cluttered up and down the stairs twenty times a day, every time presenting a different countenance. Frenzied with some petty anxiety, bursting with pride over some clever stroke, slily silent over a maturing plan, chuckling at the latest *bon mot* of the cloth bazaar, breathing a forbidden rumour with nervous dread and delight, he filled each passing day with novelty and inspiration. Claiming me as his property, he dragged me into the bazaars to smoke sweet cigarettes with Banians, tell fabulous yarns to Khojas, sip coffee with Arabs, and pass the time of day with almost every chance-met Zanzibari. Beaming benevolently, his pock-marked face radiating good will, he would say persuasively:

"Ah, here is the house of Jan Hansraj! Oh, how many times Jan Hansraj, he say, 'You come my house!' What you think, *bwana?*". . . And in another moment I would find myself steered into the presence of young Jan Hansraj, squatting over coffee and exchanging compliments and yarns with him.

Now here was romance that most folk would have passed, unknowing, by; for Jan Hansraj's

father financed Tipoo Tib; and Tipoo Tib was the great Zanzibar Arab who fought over and conquered, in his search for ivory (white and black), all that vast territory which stretches from the head waters of the Congo and the Nile to the waters of the Indian Ocean between Cape Delgado and Mogadishe. This Tipoo Tib was the chief support and guide of Stanley in his perambulations about central Africa; and prime factor in the rescue of Emin Pasha, who was reluctantly obliged to abdicate from the inner Soudan when Gordon was awaiting with cynical amusement the fate that engulfed him at Khartoum. . . .

So the tales I heard nonchalantly spoken between weaving wreaths of cigarette smoke and over cardamom-flavoured coffee, of white ivory and black, of piratical dhows and sinister court intrigues, of the seething slave-market around the corner and the great *safaris* that gathered at Bagamoyo on the mainland across the way, and vanished into the heart of the Black Continent for twelve and fourteen years at a stretch—these tales were such as you hear over narghilehs amid the babble of the bazaar, but can never, never remember to repeat in prose.

I saw much of the tangled, slimy, tawdry, teeming bazaar in Ali's company. He was a good tutor, omitting nothing, as might a finicky Parsi, anxious not to offend a *sahib's* nice taste or corrupt his own. He jibbered, and grunted, and nodded his head solemnly or grinned maliciously, and initiated me in all the mysteries. Once he even took me to look at his sister, though I promised to pretend I saw nothing. Down an alley in the tin bazaar we passed a certain shop.

"There, *bwana,* look! It is she!"

Squatting on the floor near the door of the shop, with a nearly naked baby, tubby and tattered with tinsel and baubles, tumbling about her, Ali's sister presented a lovely picture. Her complexion was warm and delicately glowing; her hair, black and smooth, seemed to glisten with life; while her large eyes gazed with abstraction down the tempting thoroughfare. There was about her an air of pensive melancholy, of unrest, of suppressed fire, that was tempered and rendered beautiful by the cold cameo fineness of her features, the undisturbed tranquillity of her pose.

Ali twitched nervously at my elbow, no doubt regretting his indiscretion, and I passed on won-

dering at the destiny that left such genuine beauty to grow up in darkness in the back alley of a bazaar—to rear brown brats whose whole object in life would be to sell shoddy cloth, bits of tins and sweetmeats, and to haggle shrilly over *pice*. . . .

Zanzibar Town is the great metropolis of the East Coast. It is Rome to the dusky pilgrim; it is Paris to the reckless wanderers, from the Bantu folk of Cape Delgado to the sons of the corsairs of Oman. Its clubs; its coffee shops; its cinemas; its dark, arched rooms, where dusky belles from India, Arabia, the Somali Coast, and Zanzibar giggle and shrill and dance monotonous dances; its spreading mango trees under whose shelter the torches burn and the tom-toms beat the measures of night-long *ngomas;* its shops tumbling with riches of roughly carved ivory and ebony, or hammered Cingalese silver and gems; its bazaars, gaudy with cheap cloth—*kikoys, hodrunks, kanzas,* bright with prints of flags and ships and emblems of royalty; the great ships lying in its roads, pouring into the lap of black Africa the increasing luxuries of Europe; the dhows bearing commerce from the Persian Gulf, the Seychelles, and Madagascar—all, all and

Zanzibar, Chief Port of the East African Coast, Formerly the Center of the Slave Trade, Showing on the Right the Sultan's Palace.

A Corner of the Goanese Market in Nairobi, British East Africa, Between Five and Six Thousand Feet Above The Sea and Virtually on the Equator.

more, contribute to the renown and lure of Zanzibar.

Whether it is a Hindu wedding glistening with tinsel, coloured lights, and mock armour, with frightened boy bridegroom and smug, patronising sire; or a visit to the great Mahometan club in a grove of mangoes by a beach on the outskirts of town, where adolescent Hindus ape the manners of Eton and Harrow on the cricket pitch,—"Oah, well played, sare! Bowled! *Bowled,* sare!"—or an expedition with Mahomet, darting in and out among the stately dhows from Muscat looking over likely bargains in teakwood tonnage, or some adventurous quest down dark, whispering alleys at night with a companion still rolling on his sea legs—each page contained a new story for me. But always the moral was the same, and the moral was Ixion's:

"Adventures are to the Adventurous."

The life of the bazaar is a peculiar thing. To the philosopher it is mostly very broad human comedy; but occasionally there is presented some tragic circumstance, violent and inexplicable, that leaves a lingering memory of colour and flame and troubled questioning. The inexplicable fascinates but never satisfies.

For instance, one day there was a hubbub in the bazaar—rifle shots, banging doors, shouts, a loud rising hum—and this is what occurred:

Two sepoys, coming away from Beyt-el-'Ajaib, the palace of the Sultan, struck by a sudden madness, turned into the bazaar. At the shop of Damoder Jerab they found the inoffensive Khoja manager sitting on a stool, calm and contented. One of the sepoys calmly raised his rifle and shot the unsuspecting man in his fat stomach. . . .

Instantly the bazaar was in a quivering panic. Shutters went up with a clatter; the brass-studded doors closed with muffled bangs; and all in the alleys scampered to shelter like frightened rabbits. A wet Banian—brother of beasts and bugs, who would have thought it as great a crime to kill a rat as his own grandmother—trying to slip unseen down a dark, moist alleyway, palpitating with terror, was discovered by the sardonic gaze of the sepoy, and a second bullet flew. It struck the Banian in the chest, and knocked him with a faint whimper into a muddied drain.

There were stirrings, whisperings, choked cries, tinkle of silver and rattle of brasses behind the dark walls. In an instant the narrow, wet

alleyways were deserted save for a few old men and women, too stunned to move quickly, and some children, lost in the swift panic. Four women, coming to an upper window to look down into the stirring bazaar, made a pretty, colourful picture under a Byzantine arch with a drab background. They were terrified with anxiety for their children; but one of the sepoys' bullets scattered them like bits of bright plumage.

Ali Bhanji, who was of course at hand, saw his child in the street and rushed out to draw him to safety just as another small boy, seeing all doors closing about him, flung himself against Dharsey's great brass-studded portal, crying out:

"Mohammed Ali Dharsey, open the door! Open the door, Mohammed Ali Dharsey! Help me! Open the door! . . ."

While the little fellow beat frantically at the black, carved door, behind which the merchants wrung their hands helplessly, the sepoy turned with a flashing smile and shot him.

When the two sepoys had expended their ammunition, except for a bullet apiece, they went on a short distance, conversing calmly together,

till they came to a convenient *barasa* at the door of a shop kept by an old woman. They told her to shut her door, and when she had done this and the street was clear, sitting down a short distance apart, they raised their rifles and fired simultaneously at each other, both falling mortally wounded. . . . So these two hillmen, born and reared in some remote hamlet perhaps on the snowy slopes of the Himalayas, when the blood madness came upon them, found their deaths in the steaming bazaars of Zanzibar. . . .

"Phew," said Ali, mopping his brow as he finished giving me his version. "How very near you not can able make business to-day! Suppose I deaded! No broker, no *shauri!* Eh, *bwana?* . . ."

And after consideration, I do think the Head Office would have been a bit querulous at any unwarranted delay caused thereby.

The man I most liked was *Hadji* Mahomet bin Ali, a pure-blooded Arab from the Yeman. There was no compromise about the *Hadji;* he had a solid, downright character, bluff, direct manner, formed his opinions after brief consideration, and acted with decision. He was an *hamal* contractor, engaged in supplying steve-

dores, *hamals,* and women to sort and clean cloves and copra, drag the stuff in carts from end to end of the town, load it in barges, and stow it in the holds of the big ships swinging in the roads. To carry on this work successfully, he had to have keen perception, initiative, and a profound knowledge of the native labourer.

Often at night when the "most costly roof in East Africa" suddenly became porous under a beating rain, threatening the destruction of thousands of sacks of cloves, I would send a messenger—old, black, blear-eyed Belalli, in a nightgown, sandals and red *tarbush,* Belalli, a pensioner, and once about the best ivory expert on the Black Continent—I would send him searching for Mahomet bin Ali, scurrying through the drenching downpour as anxious over the cloves as a parvenu over a string of pearls. . . . Presently into the darkness of my room would come the *Hadji,* silent and grave, his black beard dripping moisture, his smouldering eyes steady under the sopping turban, the hilt of his dagger gleaming with the wet.

"Maharabah!" he would greet me. "What is the trouble now, *effendi?*". . . And within twenty minutes the big godowns would be re-

verberating with the shouts and songs of coolies struggling in the glow of huge blazing lights to clear the threatened cloves.

Whenever I ran into the *Hadji* at the Clove Market, I spent many pleasant moments with him discussing the world and its people. Looking through the overflowing godowns out to the open bay where the great three-masted teakwood dhows congregated from every corner of the Indian Ocean, and the rusted iron steamships, worn with wartime's trafficking, tugged wearily at their chains, and the small battered fishermen's craft and outriggers from the mainland drifted about like chance-blown autumn leaves, we swung our heels under a *hamal* cart and let the world pass in review.

We both knew Arab and Jewish traders in Aden and along the Somali Coast, and had dealings with Parsi merchants of Bombay. Mahomet had been a veritable Sinbad, and told his tales as the story-tellers of old Baghdad told theirs:

"There lived in the Hedjaz a merchant who was my uncle; and when I was a boy, my father sent me to him to undertake a trip to Mogadishe. This voyage we carried camels to trade with the

Somalis for goats, hides, bullocks, gum copal, kart, or whatever else might offer a profit in Aden or Medina. . . .

"You have not been to Muscat! I myself went there on my fourth trip, to purchase dates and rugs. . . .

"Ah, *effendi,* I thought I had travelled. But you, you who are half my age, have seen twice as much."

I suggest deprecatingly: "One man may travel far and see nothing; while another, sitting in his shop door, sees all the world pass before him. To travel does not always mean to learn, *Hadji.*"

"By Allah, that is true. Look!"

And he indicates a little, weary, home-sick group, squatting by the shelter of a wall, gazing out to sea, or stealing curious glances at the all-important Indians and the black Swahilis shuffling and lounging past. They are Arabs from Oman, three youths and a girl. She is unveiled and has the wild, clean-featured beauty of the desert, with large, liquid eyes, and a skin that is warm and fresh; while the youths, comely and lithe, are plainly anxious to be off again. One glance tells us they have come in a dhow

from the Persian Gulf, picking their way among the stars across the waste of the Indian Ocean, trusting to Allah and every chance wind that blew. . . .

Envy rises in me. I too should like to sail those seas, master of my dhow, and a plaything of the winds—to take my chance with Kismet on the open seas, while my heart leaped with life, and my tongue sang songs as old as Hafiz:

"By Allah! wild with love I flame;
And he who loves is ne'er to blame!
Drink, *mahabubie,* drink!"

I suggest this to the *Hadji,* and he smites his thigh: "Allah! Allah! We will do this, *effendi!* You and I, we will . . ."

But I already foresee my departure in a big, rattling, lop-sided transport packed with blacks in khaki, with web kits stuffed with cartridges. But some time, *Hadji,* some time! . . .

Besides these three, there were my insolent black overseer, Adbaraka, always short of money, haughty with the women, among whom he imagined himself an Arab, yet proud of his work; and dear old Belalli, shuffling, mumbling, laughing Belalli, gentle and anxious as a grand-

mother, and loyal as a dog; and Ali, my boy, afflicted with elephantiasis, dragging a foot the size of a gate post, till I gave him a hut and took on his rogue of a brother in his place; and Bimzi, chief of the *hamals,* with the body of a Hercules and the good-nature of a puppy, despite a gash across his face from ear to chin—a memento of happy, care-free days in Muscat. . . . They were all good children, and gave sufficient anxiety and amusement to fit every mood.

Never was there a tedious moment from the hour of singing dawn when I awakened to the greeting of the dusky damsels who brought the water for my bath, their broad splayed feet flip-flopping on the stone floor, their eyes rolling roguishly under the dripping vessels poised on their kinky heads, the great red and yellow buttons in their stretched ears gleaming against vast expanses of bare brown skin, their flimsy, coloured *hodrunks* drawn tight about their swaying bodies, and their betel-stained gums showing in broad grins as each called in turn:

"Jambo, bwana! Peace, master! *Jambo! Jambo! Jambo!".* . . This, and the warm light pouring through the arches, the twittering of the love-birds on the roofs, the distant songs of boat-

men swinging to their oars, the call of bugles across the waters, a banging of doors and bolts, and little bursts of shrill laughter from the women in the godown below; and Ali, apologetic because of his big foot, bearing a tray of pine-apples, oranges, bananas, and mangoes, still cool with the dew of night—all indicate dawn, and another day. . . . And thence onward each hour is filled with its appropriate adventure, until at last night comes and crowns them all. Oh, the nights of Zanzibar—wild nights, weird nights, nights full of charm and harmony!

The old days are passing when an adventure in the dark bazaars ended often in the "hough!" of a dagger struck home, the thud of a falling body, the broken sigh of a defeated soul. It may still end so; but the intriguing mind finds other distractions, and long-cloaked figures crowned in high red *tarbushes* keep the law—within radius of the glow of arc-lights. Besides, there are sufficient diversions beyond the walls of *harims,* and the divans of the gamblers—the coffee stalls sell pink and yellow sodawater, bottled by Hindus; electric lights make bright spots about the *sukhs* where farmer and fisher-

man dump their wares, and romance still survives. One day I saw a small fish, which a fisherman had sold for seven *pice,* retailed for seven thousand rupees because it was discovered that Allah had inscribed its scales with a sacred phrase from the Koran! On the edge of the town broad, palm-fringed football fields are littered with youths in many-coloured garbs like chips upon a green baize table; and under the protection of a grove of palms there rises a canvas temple, reared for the great god of Mirth.

Every night within this temple — where gather wrinkled Arab sailors from Muscat or Madagascar or red-faced, burly English sailors from where the Severn flows; black *askaris* from the Ulogoro hills; bearded sepoys from the Punjaub; hilarious Tommies from Battersea; precise Parsis in linen-dusters, with round, varnished hats; squatting, half-naked Banians with loin-cloths tucked between their knees; Goanese dressed like mid-Victorians and speaking Portuguese; Swahilis in red *tarbushes* and white *kanzas* and immeasurable grins across their black faces; natives of Seychelles; aboriginal Wahadimu; Khojas; and Japanese; old, young, and middle-aged, their children, their mistresses,

and giggling painted ones, coquettishly rolling their eyes behind their *yashmaks,* or brazenly unveiled—all, all wait with the same emotions the coming of the god. . . . And the high priest, standing on a chair, waves for silence.

He is sightless in one eye, his cratered face indicating that small-pox was to blame. Old blue-and-white striped pantaloons and well-worn sandals, a discarded tweed waistcoat, a dirty, badly rolled turban, set him off and lend dignity to the impressively raised hands as he makes his announcements in a cracked voice in four languages, ending with Kis-swahili and English:

"*Juma-na-moja, watu wote watacuja hopa!* Shahli Shaplin! ! ! *Cheka-cheka-cheka!* . . . Satterday night, Larf-larf-larf-larf! . . ."

And the babel of languages suddenly becomes harmony. Each understands all; and all understand to the depths the great roar that shakes the temple walls when a figure—mainly Boots, a Stick, a Little Bowler Hat, a Moustache, and a Vitalising Spark—suddenly appears on the wall, trips, and lands on its chin amid Californian scenery. . . .

This is the common meeting ground for all the world.

At other times I must play many parts, for it's bad for a man to neglect his own; and I never do. The world for me is a three-ringed circus, and myself a boy who sees each ring, yet somehow misses nothing.

I spent decorous nights at the Club, drinking Child's cocktails in emulation of a man whom I regarded with whimsical respect,—the same who was instrumental in laying ten miles of toy railroad along the coral beach, through the crowded bazaar, and among the palms to the toy village of Bu-bu-bu,—but avoiding the bridge tables where liver patients tested their symptoms; and dined with boastful little traders, or fed-up soldiers, or blasé administrators; or spent hours over ancient periodicals from London. Sometimes I dined in the uniform of Piccadilly with People of Importance and discussed high topics cleverly. More often I followed my natural inclinations, and made merry in neighbouring Messes, or my own, where, gathered about pianos, we sang sentimental ditties and mournful lays. Our favourite haunt was the home of a Man from Detroit.

The first floor of the great barrack where he lived was filled with oil and rare petroleum

products. But on the third floor were his rooms, littered with delicately carved bits of ivory on ebony stands, old armour and rare weapons, lace and silk, tasteful pictures, and a piano; while in a neighbouring room were all the essential adjuncts to conviviality. According to the occasion, whether a birthday or one of those fêtes that bring back memories of a land obscured by distance, we partook of liqueur cocktails, mint juleps, or champagne punch, and made the starry welkin tremble with songs of long trails and cosy little homes. They were quaint parties.

"Bob" and "Ascot," the former red-faced and grinning, with fresh, curly hair tousled over merry blue eyes, the latter tanned and gloomy of aspect, though possessed of a sombre devil—both fresh from the rocking bridges of their respective commands, little storm-tossed sister ships, inseparables, who poked their noses in every bay or delta along the Germanee coast, hunting for trouble and finding it; "Catchy Boy," with young and smiling face, quizzical, sun-bleached blue eyes, and hair prematurely grey from nocturnal jungle tête-a-têtes with truculent Germanees, unconverted black men, and inquiring beasts of predatory kinds; the Little

Trader with the big voice, who, in serious moods, shook the markets on flying visits from Tananarive in Madagascar to Kisumu on Victoria Nyanza; the Man from Detroit at the piano, smiling, debonair, large of girth, and big of heart, with "the latest" (two years old) at his finger-tips—the group of us would hang arm-in-arm about the piano, heads thrust forward, eyes straining to read the words, while Bob howled:

"For . . . just . . . one . . . day-an'-one-night
You . . . were . . . muh . . . dream-uv-deelight
Till . . . you . . . fay-ded-away
With-thuh-light-uv-thuh-day. . . ."

All heads would come up with a jerk, faces turn raptly to the twinkling sky, mouths gape wide in one simultaneous movement, and a melancholy wail tremble on the balmy air:

"Ohn . . . Lake . . . Champlain!". . .

Other nights were not musical nights—nights when we played fox-and-geese in our pyjamas through the dark, slimy, labyrinthine alleyways at three *ack emma,* or scaled forbidden walls by means of drain pipes, or stormed each other's citadels under a barrage of soda-water bottles,

pineapples, mangoes, oranges, buckets, and lumps of coral, which, crashing on corrugated-iron roofs, raised unappreciated din. Again, there were other nights, polite nights when we supped and danced with propriety.

One such night we spent at the Bishop's house. Under a soaring moon, with soft, magnolia-scented breezes blowing from the whispering sea, and the Sultan's black band filling the air with the languorous strains of tropic music, the stridency of life seemed to pass away. Drifting across the dancing space with an attractive, dreamy-eyed damsel resting in my arms, and the notes of *La Paloma,* so soft they mingled with the murmur of the waves, and the wind stirring through the palm fronds and laughing amid the waxy leaves of the clove trees, beating tenderly on my receptive heart, these, I felt, were moments that gave life its sweetness. Piquant thrills are for other times.

Yet as night blew on, and rain-drops began to spit from a black, heaving sky, and the crowded frolickers gradually vanished in rickshaws and quaint vehicles through the dark shadows of the surrounding groves, there came a cry from out a dark lane. Catchy Boy and I, arriving

together from different points, discovered an old-fashioned closed carriage ditched in the bushes, with a pair of overturned horses floundering and struggling in their traces. Black, terrified footmen in scarlet coats jumped about with flickering link-lights. A beam disclosed a silk-clad leg thrust through the shattered glass of the door; and a charming face, flushed and dishevelled, lifted itself from the wreckage, exclaiming petulantly:

"Damme! This *is* a pretty pickle!"

Catchy Boy and I crossed glances in the dim light, and struck by the same thought, he drew an imaginary snuff-box, and exclaimed softly:

"Zounds, me lord! Sure 'tis no proper night for wenches to take the road from Bath without escort.". . .

So we delivered them from the ditch and set them safe upon their way.

Peruque's dance I remember chiefly because of an incident. It was a dance and supper in Victoria Gardens, where the ladies of the Sultan's *harim* formerly bathed. It was a charming affair, with the sole contretemps of a baby hippopotamus blundering in among the tables and chairs and disporting on the dance-floor until

persuaded to leave by fifteen determined natives with ropes. . . .

But the best nights of all were at home, when the babbling city had sunk reluctantly into silence.

My huge old Arab house had the reputation of being haunted. Unfortunately, I cannot prove this; but every night at two in the morning I awakened and lay for many minutes listening to the few faint sounds that tapped musically upon the bell of silence: the everlasting whispers and laughter of the waves upon the beach, the tap-tap-tap of death's-head beetles in the *berities* of the ceiling, the rustling movement of rats, the clear silver tinkle of ships' bells in the harbour, the unexpected rattle of a chain, far off the plaintive shriek of a lemur, the stirring of palm fronds outside my window. Turning my head, I could look out through the porticos across the water, silvery under the moon, with red and white and green lights glowing from the grey shadows of ships. A pale, brooding moon sometimes gazed at me from behind a fan of palms; and then ghosts would truly steal about me, tender, ministering ghosts—memories of other days, and dim dreams that may yet come true.

In their arms I'd sink again to sleep. . . .

Stretching behind the venal Town, which is huddled upon a spit of land, the rolling, embowered hills rise high and higher to the northward upon their coral base, until, near the little village of Mkokotoni at the northern end of the island, an outcropping of genuine strata has lifted itself several hundred feet above the blue seas.

Never have I seen a more beautiful or richer island, except perhaps moody Oahu. Rolling, verdant hills and gentle valleys with sweet, clear water and a teeming wealth of fruit and palm, broad, curving bays upon whose dazzling coral beaches the iridescent waters toss a feathery white fringe of surf, make a setting for the ruins of old castles, smothered under all-embracing creepers, and the deep-arched Arab houses on the *shambas*.

The ruins tell tales of the days when the black Zang potentates yielded sovereignty of the seas to the questing Portuguese who rounded the Cape in the fifteenth century; and of the later days of dark, passionate struggle when the Imams of Muscat shattered the might of Portugal from Mogadishe to Kilwa, a small port now,

but then a place of many mosques. With the passing of the day of Tipoo Tib, *that* power, too, has since passed away; for the present swarthy, black-bearded Sultan, though he smiles sardonically as he rides quietly forth to take the evening air, has no illusions as to the extent of his might. For the power of the Sayids has now passed. . . . Bob and Ascot and Catchy Boy and myself —we now uphold the Raj! . . .

You would not think it to see us spinning along narrow, coralline lanes hedged with groves of cocoanut and glistening, fragrant clove trees —the Man from Detroit asleep in the limousine, making a pillow for Bob and Ascot, who snore softly, each on a shoulder, lulled by the hum of the motor, the soporific fragrance of the air, the soothing motion of the car as it dips and swerves and soars, and the rush of balminess that pours about us; while the slim Goanese driver keeps his eyes on the road, and I let my dreaming gaze wander afield.

These lanes are traversed only by swaying bullock-carts, sleepy jack-asses, white, trotting Muscat donkeys, and Swahilis on foot carrying on their heads large green baskets woven with palm and overflowing with fruit. Occasionally

striking hoofs awaken echoes, and an Arab, mounted on a blooded horse, comes dancing by, gravely saluting as his steed curvets and rears, maintaining with dignity the ancient principle that the mounted man is the superior man. This is a *shamba* owner—one of the old stock of Arabs who have divided the island into great plantations where they cultivate the clove and cocoanut, and such things of lesser importance as the aloe. They were great aristocrats in the days of slaves, but now that the Swahilis are nominally independent, it's a different matter. . . . Greasy Hindus, squatting in the bazaars, advance money on prospective crops—and the Arab, who cares nothing for to-morrow, is gracefully yielding his estates to a more wily civilisation.

Along the roads are little villages, clusters of huts with walls of mud plastered on intertwined pole withes, with roofs of palm thatch. Screens stand about on which hang manioc drying in the sun; and on broad reed *makandas* under the trees the drying meat of the cocoanut shrinks from the shell to form copra; while the last fragrant pistils of the clove crop are spread on mats nearby. By some of the huts are

barasas, or mud platforms on which Hindu traders lounge, trading odd bits of tin, beads, cigarettes, and sweets, for cloves and copra filched by the native from his Arab master.

Naked children, a few chickens and guinea fowls, a goat or two, and occasionally a bullock, wander about the huts or tumble over each other under the shelter of umbrageous mango trees littering the ground with succulent fruit. The lanes are lined with trees—mango, banyan, palm (the courtly cocoanut; the betel, dainty and proud as an aigrette; and the sensible sago), spreading jack-fruit, clumps of bamboo, and groves of clove dotted with pink clusters of aromatic mother-of-clove. Through the clean, dark-green foliage of the cloves, or over grey, crumbled walls overlaid with soft yellow, red, and green moss and lichen, peep red-tiled or iron-grey roofs and the curves of deep arches where the Arabs keep their wonted state.

The native Swahilis of the plantations are still only semi-independent as they depend on the *shambas* for work and wages, while the government regulates their movements. But with a little cash, a *panga* to cut cane, and a hoe to scratch a patch of soil, they live in plenty and

contentment. Juicy pineapples and mealy bananas grow wild and are regarded as weeds on the *shambas,* while the mango drops its succulent fruit broadcast, and orange trees scatter their golden crop by the roadside. . . .

Over brimming brooks, around emerald hillsides, by the side of dazzling bays, along the edge of bluffs from whose heights we can see the fisher-craft darting about like water spiders on the calm surface, we come to tempting spots—Mkokotoni and Chwaka, where there are a few bungalows. Here we picnic and bathe. It is delicious water, and to bathe in it is like flinging yourself into the arms of amorous Dawn. . . .

I have often swum at night, too, far out among the vessels in the harbour of Zanzibar Town, every stroke weaving a garment of phosphorus about me, and in the pleasure of the swim forgetting all too soon the lesson I learned from Aden's sand sharks. . . .

To the glories of this island the European seems blind and indifferent. He plays golf and tennis conventionally at Mnazi Moja, the sports club on the edge of town; but beyond this, unless he is a soldier and *must,* he will not venture except to picnic for a few hours. He does not

seem able to tear himself away from the pathetic prattle and tame delights of the Club, or proximity to the Resident whose favours are like fickle fortune, or, perhaps, the companionship of others of their kind and dalliance among the few white ladies whom the fate of their husbands has drawn to the island.

Argumentatively, I once made this opinion public.

"My dear chap, don't be silly," said the Doctor, glaring over a whiskey-and-soda. "White men can't stand it—malaria—dysentery—fever—damn rot."

I pointed out that as a soldier I had lived weeks at a time in the country, in its most disreputable and deadly parts, and had grown heavy on it.

"That may be," said a young administrator, "but you forget that this is only a protectorate. We must look after the interests of the present land-owners, you know. We can't take their property from them. . . ."

"But Hindu usurers may?" I suggested. "No. The trouble is this. You've got a nice little island here, and you all have nice little jobs, and you don't trouble your little heads a single

thought more than the exigencies of the service demand. You don't want to popularise the island because you couldn't stand official competition. You've got ice-plants, a ten-mile railroad, soda-water establishments, electric lights. . . ."

"Well, dash it, after all, that's something."

"It is," I admit—blandly, I expect. "But all those things were started by traders, mostly American. . . ."

"Well, why don't *you* go in for planting?"

There he had me.

I looked from the balcony out across the bay, at the monitor squatting in the roads, at a black Ellerman freighter unloading into red barges, at a plume of smoke on the horizon, at the clouds banked low over the African mainland. I was particularly fascinated by that bank of distant clouds. The rumbling of the vessels and the din of the bazaar rose to my ears, filling them with a dull buzzing, while I seemed to smell the heady smell of a ship's hold. . . . Suddenly I knew that in another month this island would be but a memory. . . .

"Ah, well, the island is yours," I said. "There are other things for me to do; and after all I

am somewhat of a visitor. . . . I have seen it; I know it pretty well; and I like it. But . . . *toujours* there is something else to be done first."

Toujours the open road and a free heel; *toujours* a flowing sheet, and the long slope of the seas. . . .

The Wilderness Patrol

DO you remember one day under the white tents of Dar-es-Salaam — "the Port of Peace"—when a scorching sun poured down too great a heat for drills, and guard-mount was a sweltering ordeal, and the hospital regulations gave you one of your rare and brief opportunities to visit us in our meagre camp, that you asked me about a patrol I took with The Commissioner beyond the Escarpment? . . . There was too much else to talk about then, so I couldn't give you much of an idea of the country. Catchy Boy and Bwana Poor had so much better to talk about; and The Commissioner, sober, was too great a distraction. Besides, as I remember, I was pretty well fed up with the bush. . . . But when, at last, they slung you in a stretcher aboard ship, and you sailed in doubt for England and home, I gathered together some scraps of paper and jotted down notes of that particular *safari* to remind you of old days, an old pal, and a hot and thunderous land that

nearly broke us both, yet left us richer far than ever wealth could do. . . . It is just a haphazard account without much regard for chronology or tense; and much there is that you can fill in, for, of course, the most of it is left out! . . . It was a war *safari,* naturally; but there is practically no talk of scrapping. The flurries of war we may always have with us; but the quivering wilderness, the great horned monsters brooding in the heat haze of primordial times, and the elemental savages who gibber in prehistoric gloom, are not eternal. . . . A few sentences may serve to bring up pleasant though melancholy memories—things which we must discuss at greater length and in another mood if we ever foregather again. . . .

When we struck a bearing, then, across my watch, and located ourselves by an angle drawn from the dim shoulder of Essimingor in the west and the white crest of Kilima Njaro floating in the heat haze a hundred and twenty miles to the northeast, we focussed our attention on the map.

"It's wrong," said The Commissioner at last stubbornly. "We should have found water an hour ago." Pointing to the tiny blue pencil marks that indicate water-holes—" 'Sometimes

dry,' " he quoted scornfully. Then with a hoarse burst of spleen: "Every blasted one has been dry for ninety-eight years!"

Certainly the only evidence of water had been sun-scorched rock and baked mud, cut and scattered by the spoor of innumerable wild creatures.

The water-bottles and *chaguls* were empty. We had covered nearly fifty miles along a dusty, pebble-strewn trail fringing the arid Massai Steppe, and were footsore and dangerously dry. Before us was the prospect of another broad, waterless stretch, and the possibility of our little column breaking up.

I lifted my eyes anxiously to the resting column of *askaris* squatting by the trail, rifles across their knees, or sitting upright gazing curiously at The Commissioner and myself; while the weary porters, stretching to the rear for almost half a mile, lolled in their stained blankets, impassive as cattle in the dust. Old Sergeant Kombo, leaning on his rifle, gazed fiercely across the hot, straw-coloured hills of the rolling Steppe; while my orderly, Ali bin Sudi, looked with dreamy eyes at the waiting line of *askaris* with the humorous cynicism of one who has often faced death.

The Commissioner rose uncomfortably and put the whistle to his cracked lips. The *askaris* fell in stiffly; the porters took up their fifty-pound loads with low grunts; the men of the baggage and rear guards cursed listlessly, calling out, "*Funga! Funga! Ke-lowse* up!"—and the long single line shuffled forward in a low cloud of dust.

Ali, by my side, suddenly touched my arm and pointed with his chin to the westward.

"Kongoni, *effendi!*"

Floating in the haze, a series of impalpable spots moved along the base of a distant kopje. This was sufficient to indicate water; and a half hour later we came to Msuakini, and found a pool among some sere sedges. It was slimy, and it stunk, resembling nothing more than a slough in a pig-sty, for an endless variety of wild creatures had wallowed in it. Our unspoken relief at having occupied the place without a fight, however, and the craving of our withered corpuscles, overwhelmed the most remote repugnance.

Pickets were posted; fires lighted; a kongoni I had shot was cut up and distributed; and the camp settled comfortably for the night. The

Commissioner and I, lolling in our camp chairs, discussed possibilities until the stars lighted up, the shadows closed in upon us, and the veldt awoke to the throbbing grunt of the hunting lion. . . .

The next evening, after passing through a belt of scrub bush and dom palm, we debouched on the Mbugwe plain, flat as a pancake with the great Escarpment rising crust-like over two thousand feet above its western edge. The surprised natives, seizing their spears and driving their cattle before them, fled into the bush. Ali and a couple of other *askari* diplomats were sent to reassure them; and presently, since we did not attack, they stole back, one by one, and their square, low, basket-like huts began to stir with life.

When we had settled ourselves by the campfires, the *sultani* himself came doubtfully forward with an escort of naked warriors bringing gifts of *mtama* meal, smoky milk, and eggs. He was soon assured of our friendship and good intentions, and squatting before us with red blanket drawn about his shoulders, gesticulating with his feathery spears, he retailed the *habari* of his villages, while his chiefs and runners on either

hand nodded confirmation and chewed the dates we gave them.

A Germanee column, he said, had recently entered the district, occupied the neighbouring village of Madukani, ravaged the country-side, and marched up the Escarpment and away into the primeval forests to the north of Lake Eyassi. They showed us trophies. This man had killed a cook. Others had tracked and speared *askaris* in the bush. Another had lain in the grass and waited for the *askari* who had murdered his brother, and when he drew near, had risen up and plunged a spear through him in full sight of the German camp . . . In the end the Germanees had been obliged to use their machine guns. . . .

With daylight we marched to the place where a scattered collection of huts had taken the name of Madukani—"at the shops"—without further information of the enemy. But here we met B—, the Assistant Political Officer, who had come down to see us from his red, castle-like *boma* stuck up on the roof of the Escarpment. He had a handful of *askaris* and a Boer ex-sergeant to control them; and with these retainers he

ruled a district of over twenty thousand square miles.

Striding in front of a weather-beaten, angular horse, the A. P. O. came along the trail. His shorts disclosed a pair of long, tan, sinewy legs; his sleeveless tunic hung from him in patched folds; a peak had been sewed to his khaki-covered *tarbush,* and this was pulled down over his eyes. Behind him in a red blanket stalked his gun-bearer, an outlawed Wattaturu chief, an exceptionally tall and handsome man with the features and dignity of an Abyssinian, while at his heels trotted a grinning Massai child, carrying a shot-gun and clad in a cast-off double-breasted waistcoat which hung to his knees.

With this picturesque escort we entered the hamlet.

I took up my headquarters in a grass *banda.* We then made a division of forces so that The Commissioner and the A. P. O. could ascend the Escarpment and endeavour to locate the German force to the northward, while I held the plain to keep the enemy from the water-holes, to check any force from the south, and to break up what-

ever detachments The Commissioner might succeed in driving off the plateau. . . .

The days that followed were full of activity and unending delight—a period of benevolent autocracy almost as good as the most excited imaginings of boyhood.

My palace was the grass-thatched *banda* at which insects perpetually nibbled; my capital, a scattering handful of mud and thatch huts where pioneer Swahilis and a few lost Hindus traded beads, wire, and cotton goods for hides, ivory, and cattle; my domain spread away into the indefinable limits of the Massai Steppe on the one hand, and to the base of the Great Escarpment on the other; while constantly I was stimulated by the piquant thrill that all this was threatened by a daring and desperate enemy, and was mine to hold.

Aside from such normal activities as working out patrols, ambushes, and scouting parties, and locating and examining tactical points, my Scotch sergeant, "Robbie," and I were kept busily engaged in drilling our men, maintaining discipline, collecting and forwarding supplies, and tending the sick. These latter included patients suffering from pneumonia, fever, dysen-

The Line of a "Peace" *Safari* Winding in Single File, Porters Bearing Fifty-pound Loads En Route for the Valley of Lions.

An *n'goma* in the Form of a Tribal Dance of the Kikuyu, the Dancers Circling in Couples.

tery, ophthalmia, and a couple of bad wounds. Runners and *akidas* came to me daily with rumours and reports, or to hold *shauris;* and these, squatted in a semicircle about my door, would wait for hours before opening an oblique discussion that never by any chance disclosed the real object of the visit until the last possible moment.

I bought cattle from the headmen, who duly tried to cheat me, but my *askaris* were Mussulmans and invariably disclosed the trick by delivering into my presence various bits of diseased tripe, bloated kidneys, and empurpled lungs. Ensued considerable *matata* when I summoned the *akidas,* and they endeavoured to placate me with the subtle reasoning of soothing gifts, including everything from honey beer to wives from among the famed beauties of Mbugwe. Having seen fair specimens of the beauties, I held my own in face of these offers. My moods, however, were frequently softened by reports that came in of lion, rhino, and elephant, spoored and sighted upon the slopes of the Escarpment, and leopards making themselves nuisances in the villages.

Once I went on a lion hunt with the *sultani,* armed only with spears and shield. Beyond this

I had little time for shooting. But one day a villager came to me with an account of a leopard who visited the huts each night. Ali treated the tale with contempt; but the *shenzi* outdid himself, until at last, having nothing else to do, I decided to visit the hamlet myself.

It was about seven miles away, and the path cut through a vast papyrus swamp threaded with deep, smooth-running streams of delicious water. The sun was declining, and the Escarpment swelling out with shadows.

In the waning light this swamp is very beautiful. Birds of rare plumage soar above it, or float on its surface; while some, like daubs of colour upon a blue canvas, dart among the reeds. Clucking, gurgling, whistling, or, like the golden-crested crane, uttering melancholy cries, they fill the air with strange music. Water lilies large and small and of many hues float in the open spaces, and an aromatic perfume faintly pervades the fresh atmosphere. It is the heart of Africa, and a parliament of birds assembles here—the scarlet "lightning bird" from the South, the black ibis and the grey from the sedges of the Nile, homely old storks from the chimney-pots of Alsace-Lorraine, the angelic egret, gruffly

quacking flocks of duck and geese, dainty little water-birds so light they seem to run upon the water, and waltzing swallows who come from God alone knows where. Surprised water-buck, whistling with alarm, leap behind screens of papyrus; elephants at night plunge and wallow in the lush sedges; and to complete the picture, the Wambugwe, in single file, with gourds on their backs filled with curdled milk or milk and blood, spears over their shoulders, and bits of dirty coloured cloth or stained hide flung loosely about them, shuffle silently along the trails. . . . But as the shadows fall and the clatter of bird life dies away, the swamp begins to hum. . . .

Before we reached the other side we were assailed by clouds of ravenous mosquitoes. Here darkness was a friend, for with the fading of daylight, the stinging tsetse had retired.

We traversed the wood-path in deepening gloom, stumbling in numerous pits made by the ponderous puds of elephant and rhino, and straining our eyes to pierce the pall of blackness. Every shadow seemed crouching to leap upon us. In this unlovely gloom, through which I stumbled with hair on end, our guide silently

disappeared, leaving us to find our way alone! . . .

Eventually we came to a small clearing with a few huts and a fire burning in the square. Some one was monotonously strumming a stringed gourd, a baby was whining, and the men of the village, squatted on three-legged stools, were solemnly taking snuff and laughing over idle jokes.

The headman dropped the gourd and tumbled his stool over.

"Peace!" he cried. "Peace! Masters!"

A place was made by the fire. A gourd of cold water was produced; and when Ali told the headman I had not eaten, wild honey and banana wine were brought, which Ali shared when I had had my fill. When I spoke of my errand, however, several of the youths by the fire laughed, and the headman stared with dismay.

"Bwana," he exclaimed desperately. "I sent no runner. There is no leopard. We have not seen or heard a cat since last new moon.". . .

In the next few minutes it was swiftly divulged that Chaussi, son of the headman, had journeyed to my *banda* hoping to procure a rifle. Return-

ing, when he realised that his simple scheme was spoiled, he had fled in a panic to the forest.

Ali was furiously sarcastic, and the headman was apologetic and anxious; but the youths were secretly amused at the beating that awaited Chaussi. At first I also was angry, but as I sat gazing into the fire, occasionally lifting my gaze to the ring of dark faces with white eyes gleaming in the reflected light of the red and yellow flames, the deep shadows pressing close on all sides, the wall of the Escarpment bending above like huge thunder clouds, and the stars peering and twinkling through the lace-work of the forest, I allowed myself to sink soothingly beneath deep waves of primitive emotions.

I lighted my pipe and told Mzee, the headman, to continue with his music. The old man picked up his gourd again, scowled fiercely for silence, and commenced to pick at the strings.

In another moment his face shone; the notes hummed and muttered; and shoulders began to lift. Heads jerked automatically at each unexpected check in the pulsing music, and the youths began to nudge each other and giggle. We were soon encircled by the remaining villagers, almost veiled by the night but for the

sheen of their smooth bodies in the light of the flames.

The notes took on a quicker rhythm. The deep gourd seemed a living thing—the voice of a satyr; it hummed; it gasped; it choked with laughter; and my savage friends, first thrusting forward the children, rapidly yielded to the intoxication of the music. . . . I became the centre of one of those strange *ngomas* that lay bare the very soul of the savage. . . .

The old man chanted, twitching and vibrating to his own mad music; the naked children, squatting back on their heels, convulsively kept time with their little unmuscular bodies to the beats; the girls and youths, on their knees, writhed through well-studied evolutions, then leaped to their feet, clapping their hands, stamping on the beaten ground—panting, singing, shouting. Sensual and without shame, naked with savage grace, maddened by a strange sort of ecstasy—it seemed to me as though the primitive soul, awakened by music, tortured by a dawning consciousness, struggled to escape its bonds.

The scene, softened by the shadows, yet grotesquely illumined by the flame; the wild music hopelessly beating against the black vast-

ness that smothered us; my own aloof presence—amazed and amused me with its strange symbolism.

I thought of dowager chaperones, of languid beauties and lissom youths; of syncopations stimulated by half dollars; of draperies and bottled perfumes; of transient beauty and moneyed worth; of social talents and those who struggle for the smile of the favoured. What folly! Here before me was the beginning of all things—here was the soul of mankind expressing in the crudest form the savage instincts that are the roots of our social life. The cynical old man watches the play, grinning but keeping it within limits; the children mimic their elders; the mothers urge on the reluctant daughters; the youths, some bold, some bashful, leap in the intoxication of the dance or hold back shyly, hoping to be persuaded! All are mad—all save Chaussi, the outcast! Because he is an outcast, peering bitterly from the shadows of the forest, he realises a new perspective; he understands true values.

I distinctly heard a fat, half-naked matron urge her simpering daughter forward, exclaiming under her breath:

"Do not be a little idiot! See how Mud, the daughter of Hot Work, is carrying on! Go dance!". . .

And I broke up the *ngoma* in a burst of laughter. . . .

The next afternoon a long lean runner came down from the Escarpment with despatches.

The Comissioner and the redoubtable A. P. O. had struck the German force on the slopes of Oldeani. Though four days from his base, The Commissioner had only one day's provisions; while the Germanees were subsisting upon the remains of a rhino. The country was a wilderness, and the nearest inhabited areas were suffering from famine; so The Commissioner, despite the enemy's machine guns and choice of position, intended to attack immediately; and would I come quickly to Mbulu to follow him up?

I set out an hour later with Robbie, leaving my boy and Ali behind, sick with fever. The going was slow at first because my foot had become infected by the bite of some venomous insect. . . .

Looking upward at the dark wall of the Escarpment, I felt the delightful sensation of climbing into the pages of an old romance—above, in the clouds, was the dim abode

of a "She," a land of "People of the Mists."

There was no moon. My foot caused sharp pains to dart up my thigh at every step. The exertion of the climb, and the rare atmosphere, made the blood beat heavily in the temples. We struggled for breath, halting frequently to revive ourselves. Heavy clouds hung close overhead, and the forested slope was gloomy and silent about us. The trail would have been absolutely impassable but for a glorious accident.

Early in the evening the great swamp below had been fired near the centre; and the flames, unhindered by wind or obstacles, swept outward in a perfect scarlet circle, throwing against the dull canopy of clouds a livid light which was reflected down again upon the thin winding path to light us on our way. Weak creatures, wheezing for the little bit of breath that gave us motion, we seemed the only germs of life in that roaring inferno, crawling painfully over the edge while the caldron filled the air with terrifying sounds—the flame ripping through the thick, dry papyrus, the wind sighing in the quivering forest, the scream of tongues of fire licking the surface of cold water.

When we reached the edge of the Escarpment,

a cold wind struck us; so, wrapping ourselves in our blankets, we made nests in the long grass and took our chances with the Dark until the pale sun unfolded to us the Land of Mists. . . .

It is a curious land. A table upon a table, with a surface roughly seven thousand feet above the sea, billowing in a turbulence of hills. Cut off from the outer (and yet savage) world by the tremendous walls of the Escarpment, there are still other barriers that hem it in—the salt Lake Eyassi to the west; the slopes of forest-clad mountains to the north; the Massai Steppe and salt Manyara to the east; and great reaches of unexplored thorn bush and mountain to the south. Thick mists often fill its valleys and rest heavily on the hills; mountain streams brawl in the ravines; while on the gentler slopes cattle are tended by little black children shouting eerily to their charges, and rough fields are tilled with wooden hoes by the naked remnants of ancient races.

It is a vast citadel to which the survivors of harried races fled in ones and twoes when the lean Hamites swept down from the north. The natives are strange in their manners, their languages, and their physical characteristics. A

A Family Gathering in a Massai *Manyeta* Behind a Thick Hedge of Impenetrable Thorn Bush.

A Massai Brave With One of His Wives, Along the Edge of the Massai Steppe.

complete nakedness, almost general in men and women, seems to be the only common trait, for some live in huts, and eat meal and meat and milk and honey, while others dwell in the forests like wild creatures, sleeping in nests or crevices in the rocks where night finds them, and living impartially on locusts, small game, and white ants. Some are comely and others almost typical of neolithic times. . . .

The men came bounding down the trail with long, springy strides, panting in peculiar shrill whistles; while the children trotted along behind the goats and cattle, prodding them with spears. The women, with all sorts of loads on their heads, from crates of fowls to gourds of curdled milk, shuffled along with hide petticoats flapping about their knees, and—if they affected the style of the Massai—heavy concentric rings of brass and copper rattling about their necks, wrists, and ankles. With varying degrees of shyness or boldness, these all gave me greeting in different tongues.

"Jambo!" of the Swahili.

"Shoba!" of the Massai, spitting on their palms and holding them forward.

"Ita-lala!" of the Wambulu.

Among a flock of wrinkled wenches who came upon me suddenly, I noticed one remarkably pretty woman. She must have been of the same stock as the A. P. O.'s presumed Wattaturu chief, for she had the fineness of feature of an Abyssinian. She was exceptionally tall, straight-limbed and high-breasted; of a light brown complexion; and with a countenance as comely as any I've seen in Africa. She carried her chin high, and her glance was level, though not defiant, while her eyes, lustrous and intelligent, seemed to indicate a spirit and experience æons beyond her black, grinning companions. She gave me a swift glance, smiled, said *"Italala"* (so I knew she was of an ancient race), and in a moment had passed, while I gazed after her, perplexed, noting the comely figure, the blue bead necklace, the soft kid-skin petticoat prettily worked in blue and white glass beads and cowries. . . . Suddenly a little withered old man came skipping and sidling along the trail, jabbering breathlessly. His sole possessions and ornaments were two long bright spears, a scarred old buffalo-hide shield, and a snuff-box of rhino horn which swung on a dirty piece of string about his neck, covering his chest with yellow

Massai Women Elaborately Gowned to Pay a Morning Call.

An Old Massai Woman—About Thirty—Eldest Wife of the Headman of a *Manyeta*.

powder. He chattered and whistled, and chirped us a greeting.

Springing lightly into the air, the little warrior emitted a long, shrill whistle, leered suspiciously at me and smirked a merry smirk.

"My wives, *bwana!* These are my wives!"

I have no doubt he paid as much as three goats for the comely one. . . .

The red, castellated *boma,* chipped and scarred with the marks of late fights, was in a whirl of activity when I passed through the small, sprawling village and approached the moated entrance. The Commissioner had met with unexpected success. By a bold bit of work, he and the A. P. O. had managed to force the unconditional surrender of almost the entire German force; and had returned pretty well used up, but escorting almost two hundred prisoners and a fair amount of booty.

Though weary and sore, the *askaris* were delighted with their accomplishment. Their eyes flashed; they leaned forward, snapping their salutes, but grinning from ear to ear; and when I spoke to them they jabbered like children in their eagerness to let their old master know the news.

"Effendi," said Sergeant Kombo with the weary cynicism of the old soldier, "it was not too bad. Not a proper battle, you understand; still, not too bad." Then, when I smiled knowingly, his eyes sparkled. "But, by Allah, excellency, it was a very beautiful journey!". . .

One day some years ago, it seems, I sat cosily in an inn with you overlooking the icy waste of Long Island Sound, discussing the exploits of the *Emden,* and then the *Königsberg* which had taken refuge in the mouth of the Rufigi after destroying the *Pegasus* in Zanzibar harbour. What stretch of imagination could then have connected me with the capture of some of its chief officers in one of the most remote sections of Africa! . . .

The Commissioner and the A. P. O. were not elated. They felt the peevishness of a small success; were irritable because of the necessary book work and accounting that these affairs entail, but principally, I think, because there was only a half-bottle of peppermint with which to celebrate; and some of the usual querulous strafeings had just arrived in despatches.

We held a *shauri* in the A. P. O.'s living-room —an attractive den littered with lion and leopard

skins, a number of horns and heads, among which was that of a three-horned rhino, and a scattering of spears, shields, bows and arrows, and knob-kerries—and examined into the state of the nation. The Commissioner had been ordered back to Aruscha, and the A. P. O. was going to be extremely busy with civil affairs. Nevertheless, a detachment of the Germanees had escaped capture and was occupying a point about a hundred and seventy-five miles distant beyond the long, desolate Lake Eyassi. These were capable of swiftly recruiting a fair force. So I decided to go after them.

I sent a patrol northward around the lake; while I went southward to intercept and drive back what remained of the enemy. . . .

A film of unreality seems to hang over this trek. Robbie and I had between us only one full day's rations, and no change of clothing; while the *askaris,* owing to the lack of supplies at Mbulu, were not very much better off.

We travelled swiftly with an absolute minimum of luggage, relying on the forests and the rarely encountered natives for supplies. Following the very edge of the eaves of Africa, each day brought experiences comparable with noth-

ing in the lives of the outer world. After passing a night of bitter cold on the heights where the Jaida River rises, and being pursued the following day for many hours by the warriors of Tungobesch, who took us for Germanees, we entered a very strange wilderness.

In this new wilderness every pace seems to mark off a hundred years until you find yourself striding through a neolithic world of tumbled rocks and gnarled scrub, of ungainly monsters and naked men with prognathous-like jaws, clicking like monkeys among themselves, and sending blunt-headed arrows after unwieldy, large-beaked birds.

The aborigines of this district are the Watindige—a tiny tribe that is rapidly vanishing, an expiring race. Since the beginning of time no other tribe has assimilated them, none seems to have won their confidence. Naked, with a child-like blending of shyness and passionate boldness, trembling in the shadows and mists of the forest, drifting through the glades, every quiver in the grass to them the voice of a demon, every soughing in the trees above the breath of gods, their narrow intellect gives to their lives a very small compass.

God is *Ishuako,* the sun, and an old woman; while *Seta,* the moon, is male. *Tsako,* the stars, are the children of the moon, though cold and distant, and not familiar with the shy little children of earth. Though the passing spirit goes to *Ishuako,* the prospect leaves the little hunter cool. He throws meat east and west, and gazes with awe at the sight of *Ishuako* come to earth and resting on Mabuguru, the dim, sacred mountain which hung on our left flank for all a day's march. But why is radiant *Ishuako* an old woman?—And why, since the sun is God, does the little hunter go to his end doubled up in a deep pit with his arrows and gourd beside him? Again, though a child of nature, he very curiously maintains the strictest and most unnatural customs in regard to morals. An unfaithful wife is beaten to death, or such was the custom until recently, and this in spite of the fact that her purchase price was only five or ten arrows with a few beads thrown in, and the added fact that neighbouring tribes are almost as a-moral as animals.

A philosophic study of these people is calculated to fill one with misgiving and a profound melancholy; and yet for them it cannot be bad

to feel that the gods are conveniently near, demons can be side-stepped, and heaven itself is almost within leaping distance above. To them the heavens seem only part of the house they live in. Copernicus might never have lived; and the whole race will pass away without one fleeting speculation on the unplumbed depths of space. Yet, after all, what is better on earth than to live cleanly, to fight a fair fight, and to die bravely in the open? . . .

Each night the leaping camp fires, lighting up groups of *askaris* and porters stewing messes in their *sufurias* and grilling bits of game, seemed to be swaying and struggling to hold a point beleaguered by the dark. When the throbbing challenge of the lion had ceased with the capture of its prey, the brief, solemn stillness would then be broken by the jungle chorus—the screams and whistles of night birds, the throaty piping of the hyrax, the mournful, distressing wail of the hyena, the interminable shrill uproar of the cicadas, panicky crashings in the bush; and then, if you peered out in the encircling darkness, the velvet canopy appeared punctured by a hundred gleaming eyes. . . . All this was life and joy to me; but I sometimes felt sorry

for Robbie, sitting by his shelter tent staring out into the thunderous dark with an unhappy and puzzled expression in his eyes.

The terror of the jungle lies in its black mystery and loneliness. A sentry on duty at an isolated point in the night believes that he is abandoned—the dark engulfs him.—Whichever way he turns, he feels that a knife, a spear, slashing talons, or grinding jaws are about to be plunged into his back, or rend him like dark bolts of lightning. . . .

At whatever hour the red moon rolled out of the gloomy east, I invariably awoke without further warning and drew myself reluctantly from the blankets; for this was the signal that the time to march had come. . . .

Standing for a moment shivering and chattering with the intense cold of the highlands, and looking at the prone, still figures about me, it comes upon me with a rush that these are more than children to me, for their health, their destinies, their lives are mine to guard, to direct, to sacrifice. The *askaris,* marking the line of the perimeter, sleep heads outward with arms flung across their rifles; the porters bundle themselves like sacks of meal beside their piled-up loads, the

weary sentry of the quarter-guard standing above them sunk into his great coat, with another sentry beyond silhouetted for an instant in the dim red glow. I do not know what dreams I may disperse, but in another instant my whistle breaks the silence; and the dim shadows, with grunts and sighs, reluctantly come to life.

In less than three minutes, Corporal Sudi bin Ismail reports for the advance.

"Temam, effendi!"

And Robbie is ready with the rear guard.

We move off in single file, stumbling down a rocky declivity, through a tangled scrub forest, and plunging forward into a mysterious darkness.

No one speaks. It's the hour of silence, and no other sound comes from the column than the dry shuffle of sandals, the snapping of twigs, and the whisper of sere grass brushing against bare legs. Always on these marches, no matter how solemnly the stillness works upon our spirits, or disenchains us till we soar with the rising moon, there is constantly a subconscious apprehension of impending danger. And this is no fanciful fear. . . .

During our operations on this *safari,* two

A Scouting Party of Meru Massai.

Rhino Killed at Sixty-one Feet When Charging. The Antics of this Blundering Beast Send the Porters Flying Into the Thorn Trees for Shelter.

straggling porters were devoured by lions; five times our lines were rushed by rhino, and once menaced by a herd of buffalo. One messenger, bearing important despatches, was attacked by a leopard. We found puff adders under our bedding and in the packs; and of a night, a hyena, pulling at my blankets, awakened me. Besides, there were the ever dangerous and annoying anopheles mosquitoes, tsetse flies, and wood ticks and jiggers, from which the least we could expect were unhealing veldt sores. In detail these things are ignored, but the subconscious knowledge of them keeps the nerves taut. . . .

No one dares to straggle at night. At the most unexpected moment a snorting whistle, apparently within four feet of the middle of each man's back, brings the column to a breathless halt. A sibilant murmur passes down the line:

"'*Faru!* '*Faru!* Master!"

We stand tensely, blinded by the dark, wondering where the blow will fall . . . and the next moment the shadows on our flanks seem to heave, and the great bulk of a rhino is flung among us.

At the first charge the line dissolves before

the beast. If he blunders away, every one breathes more easily, and the march is resumed. If he charges again, again the line dissolves—and again!—and again! Ordinarily no one dares fire, for even a rhino may be ally to the enemy. But if the occasion warrants, little spurts of flame stab the dark, and the snap of the rifles awakens strange echoes.

The antics of this blind, blundering, furious fool are merely incidents, and often amusing. It's no grave matter to watch naked porters flying like squirrels into thorn trees, and afterwards very slowly and very delicately plucking themselves off again. The real terror of the night is cold, intelligent, merciless.

Trudging along through the dark, crowding bush, making no more sound than a night wind through northern pines, marching becomes automatic, and the unoccupied mind begins to steal away homeward—to Argyll, to Taplow in sparkling June, to the Boston Post Road when the frost-touched leaves are falling; or, perhaps, to jungle clearings or nights in Zanzibar. . . . Suddenly a shot snaps in the bush, a bullet swishes like a whip above the head. Several more sing

from the flank. Then comes the sickening, damnable stutter:

"Dud! dud! dud! dud! dud! dud! dud!—"

There is a rush. Every one flings himself into position to await a murderous charge, or to push forward blindly past the ungauged menace; while, for a suffocating instant, a tumult of thoughts and emotions sweep over the leader—the weight of his responsibility, the necessity for immediate and decisive action, the horror of failure, the first seeming impossibility of success; and then the fleeting thought, in this savage jungle with none but black men about, in the tomb of African night: is this the Rendezvous? . . .

We marched under the walls of Mkalama one day when dawn was breaking; and found the great white-washed *boma* rearing its walls on the crest of a kopje in the centre of a plain encircled by rugged hills.

Major H— was in charge of this lonely but powerful post, a most hospitable and kindly man who had hunted in the Canadian Rockies and travelled the shores of Tanganyika twenty years ago. He gave me the latest military in-

formation, found new porters to replace my weary Wambulu (exhorting them from the *barasa* of his citadel), and introduced some of his provisions into my empty chop-box.

He and Major B— from Kondoa-Irangi, a neighbouring post about a hundred and fifty miles away, had been entertaining very gloomy thoughts about the German menace in America. I was able by facts and fervour to persuade them that American ideals had no regard for race or previous nationality, that the country was a solid commonwealth.

"Well, it's very reassuring," said Major H— with a clearing brow. "I'm glad to know it."

"Jolly good," said B— thankfully. "It's splendid news."

So that settled a certain unrest in central Africa.

I was grimy and very sloppy; but the Majors and I, lolling in long chairs, with hands crossed comfortably on our stomachs, had a very refreshing discussion on Tudor architecture and interior decorations, on O. Henry and Stephen Leacock, before I moved off the same day and limpingly led my *askaris* over the hills and away into a still more rugged wilderness.

This wilderness was virtually waterless and stretched away to the districts bordering the southern tip of Victoria Nyanza. It was rich game country, but trackless and virtually without water at this season, though at other times great floods suddenly sweep over broad expanses of it. We were obliged to dig for hours in dry, sandy courses to obtain drink; while for food I shot kongoni, wildebeest, eland, and antelope, without stopping the column or prolonging a single halt.

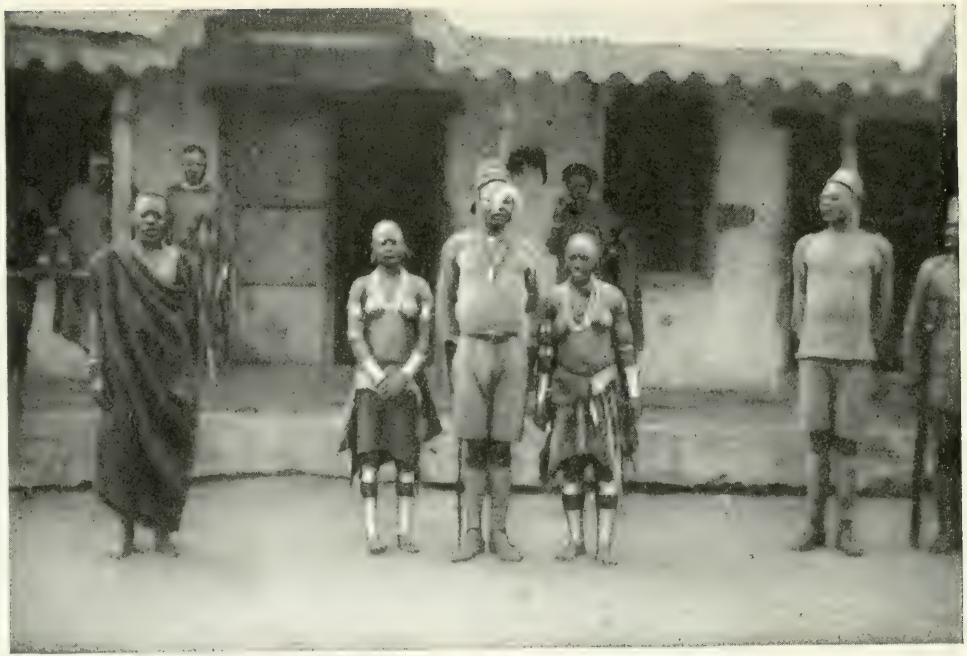
Once at dawn on the plain of the Sibiti I shot one of the huge, black-maned lions for which the place is famous; while two others rose from the dust nearby and ran away like frightened dogs. All sorts of game lived in the bush and along the fringes of the plain, and wild fowl in places were as numerous as chickens in a run.

One day at the end of a waterless march, we halted and made a very dry bivouac in a hopelessly sandy course. We dug for hours without finding the slightest evidence of moisture; our tongues were large and our mouths had little saliva in them. Sitting dejectedly outside the camp, I watched a troop of baboons with rising

interest. Though droll, they are dangerous if you arouse their ill will. So I did not laugh to offend the lumbering elders; for I find they also are bound by laws, have their conventions, and live up to them. The old men are rough and surly, cynical with their women folk, and annoyed at the chattering of the children; the women are patient but sly, dragging the whimpering *"totoes"* about, or clouting the more lusty or mischievous youngsters; while the youths are forever planning intrigues under the baleful gleam of the old men's reddening eyes, and suffering their furious onslaughts if discovered. . . . However, I followed the troop, and they brought me to a grove of palms bearing large, fibrous nuts filled with a substance like rich vanilla custard, for which we were almost as grateful as though each were a gourd of water. . . .

Eventually we entered the Muanza district, where the huts become high and conical and are capped with ostrich eggs. Stockades encircle them, and the meal is stored in vast rock caverns.

The *sultani* of Kitaganda came out with a large retinue to meet me; and I held a *shauri* under a baobab tree. So far the scouts and ir-



Askaris With Shirati Wives, in the Muanza District. The White Crescent Over the *Askari's* Forehead Is the Tooth of a Hippo.

Shirati Wives of Kikuyu *Askaris,* in the Muanza District, German East Africa.

Flying Column Entraining at Voi in Steel Carriages of the Uganda Railway.

regulars had brought in a number of prisoners, and driven off foraging parties. An intelligence officer, scouting from Mkalama, had reported to me that the dwindling German force had, upon our approach, abandoned their camp and fled northward. This hasty retreat entailed three days' march without water, and at the end would bring them straight into the hands of my northern patrol.

There was nothing then for me to do but to retrace my steps as rapidly as possible, trusting that the Mbulu force could in the meantime cope with the Germanees.

My men were very tired, and my foot now in a dangerous condition. The poison had apparently gone into my leg, so that the pain had spread from knee to groin; while the foot itself, due to crude giraffe-hide sandals I had cut with rough, parchment-like thongs, was blistered, raw, and filthy. Two of the *askaris* also had bad feet; a great water-blister from heel to toe covered the foot of one, while the other, afflicted in the same manner, had cut the swelling skin with a sheath knife, so that the bottom of the foot was completely raw. Neither of these *askaris* said a word to me about their feet, and

would not drop behind. At the same time I could not let down on the pace.

The return march to a great extent was over ground already covered. Distances, dangers, water-holes were known in advance, and the knowledge that the *safari* was moving homeward served to enliven the column. I enjoyed, with less anxiety, the silent mystery of the bush; and the glorious majesty of *Ishuako,* the sun. . . . Once at the Naval arsenal in Washington, a boy companion and myself were almost overwhelmed by the accidental overturn of a caldron of molten magnesium bronze. It spilled about us like sparkling burgundy. Very much like that, the sun, tilting over the edge of the Escarpment, poured its red and gold into the valleys, sending its rays splashing and scintillating through the lifting mists. The choir of the jungle gave it greeting, and even the *askaris* sang—at dawn.

After leaving The Commissioner and the A. P. O. at Mbulu, I covered with my men over two hundred and sixty miles, mainly over unmapped wilderness trails, in fourteen days, reaching Mbulu on the evening of the last day. I was just in time to receive a despatch from the

northern patrol reporting that, with the stout A. P. O. in charge, accompanied by *ruga-rugas* and native police, it had bumped the German force after coming around Lake Eyassi, "according to schedule"; and there in the bush surprised and attacked it, accounting for all in prisoners and casualties.

Accordingly I took the A. P. O.'s angular horse, and leaving the *askaris* to rest at the *boma,* rode out eighteen miles and met the returning party. Both prisoners and *askaris* looked very weary and forlorn. The A. P. O. saw his men into camp, then walked a bit with me talking over events. There was no doubt the men were in too weak a condition to march for several days; and since urgent despatches had come through recalling me, I could not delay. So, as we met on the plains, though with the saddle reversed, the A. P. O. and I parted on the heights. I saw his hand wave in the dark.

"Good luck!" he called. "Maybe I'll see you in Aruscha."

"Maybe! Good luck!" and the old horse went stumbling along the trail. . . .

On the following morning, turning our backs on Mbulu, we set out on the return trek to

Sanja, over a hundred and eighty miles away. Dawn found us on the edge of the Escarpment once more.

As the sun rose hotly over the Steppe, the white, spreading plains, salt lake, and forests of thorn rolled thousands of feet below us like a drab and worn-out carpet—measureless, waterless, dusty, and dull. But far away, almost against the sun, a pale eminence appeared—the rounded dome of lion-haunted Lol Kissale.

Two paths lay before us. The one to the east was considerably shorter, but it required dragging my sore and tired men across a seventy-mile stretch without water; while the roundabout route past Lol Kissale was mainly through dense, unexplored thorn forest, though I judged it offered a possibility of water.

The *askaris* fell in slowly and stiffly. I said to them:

"Listen, *askaris*. There is no water on the straight road. But near Lol Kissale perhaps there is water—perhaps none. I'm not yet sure. Nevertheless, I'm taking the long road. Those who are sick may remain behind at Madukani. I promise the remainder two days' rest in Aruscha when the march is done.". . .

The nearest *askari* said, "Yes. We are ready, master." And my orderly, clicking his heels, grinned and murmured, *"Ahsanti sana.* Thank you very much, *effendi.* We will go with you."

So we turned our faces away from the Land of Mists and commenced the three-thousand-foot plunge down to the flat, drab plain. . . .

Noon halt was at a wallow where brackish water oozed from the edge of a salt-encrusted lake; but nightfall found us well in the forest.

No enchanted wood of Grimm's had half the charm of this stretch of unexplored bush, marked only by game trails. Its silence seemed a sort of suspended animation which might be aroused any moment into weird and devastating action. What terrific forms lurked within the forest recesses we could not tell, yet on every hand there multiplied evidence of terrible restless lives. Huge wallows; pud marks like small wells; fair-sized trees torn up by the roots; pathways as broad as country lanes; skulls and horns emphasising the shadows—a riot of wanton life and unmourned death, bound by no laws but the lust to conquer and the fierce determination to

live. . . . And yet we saw little. The forest seemed to hold its breath as we passed through.

Once the forest about us suddenly came to life. For fully twenty minutes the shadows danced with the light of grey and yellow bodies flashing by; the trees seemed to shake with the soft rumble of galloping hoofs; and strange whistlings and barkings startled our ears. As suddenly the sounds ceased; and we shuffled on with the uncomfortable impression that a thousand eyes glared at us from behind the trees.

But there was drink.

Each day we found a water-hole; one, a lily-pond, fragrant, clear, and enlivened by the presence of graceful birds and beautiful antelope; another, a round hole in the shadows, covered with green scum through which two wicked little hell-divers swam restlessly. ("But then, be careful, for if you drink of one, you will shrink and become ugly as a toad; but if you only taste the other. . . .") We drank impartially. Akida bin Juma and Dongolaya could not possibly have added to the homeliness of their features, and I certainly saw no improvement. Besides, the *kilongozi,* a bee-hunter whom I had picked up for a guide, had tasted all the waters,

and he assured me he had got nothing worse than varicose veins.

Still, I suspect that *kilongozi.*

He was himself a forest imp, and had spent forty-odd years stealing honey from the little folk and running away from the big folk of the forest. That forest terrified him, strangely enough; and later, on his return journey, he made a detour of seven days in order to escape its dangers. Black, wiry, and naked, he was a gibbering child of the wild. A bit of blanket flung over his shoulder; a dirty red cap with a bedraggled feather in it; worn-out sandals; two long, shiny spears; a scanty string of blue beads, with a tiny tobacco pouch—these constituted his entire furniture and fortune. Yet he was merry as a child, wise as an old man, bold and timorous as any forest creature.

When his little old face puckered up in a grin, disclosing his solitary yellow tooth, the whole line smiled; when he broke into the shrill chatter of the Wambugwe tongue, the *askaris* laughed; but when, at each halt, he squatted before me to light his improvised bark pipe, drew huge draughts of smoke into his leathery lungs, then burst into squeals and shrieks and splutters

of joy, the forest was shaken by a strange explosion of mirth from a hundred and forty savages.

On the third night after leaving the foot of the Escarpment, we reached the edge of the forest and came out upon the trail from Ufiome which skirts the Massai Steppe and leads past Lol Kissale. The *askaris,* setting foot on this road, were jubilant; they laughed and chattered and made up rude songs about it. This seemed to annoy the *kilongozi* intensely. He became shy and silent and excessively nervous, muttering to himself and casting appealing glances backward.

I couldn't understand this at all until suddenly towards evening he gave a low squeal, seized me by the arm, and dragged me to one side of the trail, his beady eyes fixed intently on something across the veldt—a wisp of smoke.

"Master, the Massai!"

In a flash I understood. For me, the ribbon of dust winding away meant friends at the end. I could envision vast, bellowing ships, screaming locomotives, and electric lights that blink the stars out of countenance; but for the *kilongozi,* all was dark. For him every forward step

A Kikuyu Showing His Tribal Marks.

Characteristic "Kiyuks" in Front of Their Banda of Mud-and-Thatch Where Pestilential Insects Hide.

Kikuyu Men With Their Wives Gathered for a Feast and Dance. Anklets and Leggings of Brass Wire, Zebra and Monkey Skins.

meant an invasion into the land of the Massai—war on the Hamite hordes. . . . How little he knows! How much do I? His sons, I suppose, will drive motor-cars. Mine may fling spears. . . .

Ali was first to spy Kilima Njaro, austere, cool, lovely beyond expression, floating high above the hot, rolling yellow veldt like a white, gleaming cloud projected above the drab pall of a smoky city.

The pace quickened.

The sight revived the utterly weary men like a cold draught. We marched all day straight towards the towering cone; but at night it seemed to have receded. We marched through the night—not having touched water since dawn—resting only till the moon came up to light the trail. We saw the sun rise red and hot on our right hand, but the great mountain, veiled in smoke from a distant burning plain and mists from the uplands, had faded utterly from view—fifty miles away.

This day, for the first time, I permitted the weaker ones to lag, and pushed on with those able to keep the pace.

The morning mists slowly lifted, and green

and gracious Meru rose up before us, clothed in verdure, with clouds in its motherly arms. Familiar but heat-scintillating kopjes now appeared on either hand, and rolled by. We all knew our destination, its distance, and what awaited us there. . . . When at last we arrived, after an unbroken forty miles of veldt, at Engare Mtoni, the first stream that pours from the cool shoulders of the mountain, the *askaris* very carefully and deliberately bathed their wrists, their ankles, their faces and heads. Afterwards they sipped a mouthful of water each, and gargled their throats. . . .

Then we bivouacked. The men bathed, washed their worn khaki, and scraped their chins with bits of old razors.

At three o'clock the same day we marched to the lovely little German-Dutch village of Aruscha, eight miles away, and entered it at dusk when the cooling air was freshened with the scent of roses and orange blossoms.

The Skipper was standing in front of the crossroads store, a smile on his sun-reddened face, a gleam of understanding in his eyes. Our greeting was commonplace. Kombo, coming to me with the question: *"Safari mkwisha, ef-*

fendi?" and then my reply: "Yes. The march is ended. You can rest here until you receive orders,"—was merely routine. . . . But the Skipper upset all my complacency with a terrible jolt.

"I'm afraid you must move off to-morrow morning," he remarked tranquilly. "The men look pretty fresh. I'd like you to go to-night, if possible!"

How I damned the razors, the soap, and the fresh water of Engare Mtoni!

"I have promised the men two days' rest," I said.

"Oh! . . . Well, these are orders from Nairobi. A troop train is waiting for us at Sanja River railhead. We have to entrain early in the morning on Wednesday. That gives you only three days. The main column has already cleared out, and I've only been waiting to see you."

"Is this absolutely urgent?"

"Yes. There's a transport waiting at Mombasa to take us down the Coast." He smiled cynically. "The whole battalion is expected to be in action down there within a month."

"Well," I said desperately, "please don't give

me any orders as to the time when I'm to march; and I'll promise to be at Sanja River at nine o'clock on Wednesday morning."

"Righto!" said the Skipper, and mounted his horse. . . .

I rested the *askaris* that night, the next day, and until three o'clock the following morning!

Then we marched to Sanja River, and reached the railhead in the dust of the main column.

I limped these last forty miles in a comfortable pair of bedroom slippers, purchased from a Greek trader. . . .

And, of course, we waited at Sanja River two days for a train! For we had encountered the tip of one of civilisation's antennæ, and knew that thenceforth we would move with much bustle, and little expedition. . . .

Unmarried Girls of the Ruanda District Gathered to Catch a Glimpse of the New Political Officer on His First Visit to Conquered Territory.

War Dance of the Meru Massai.

Kwa Heri

MY boy came in breathlessly to announce that the M. T. had sent a car for me, and it was waiting with my bags already packed. There was no longer any excuse for lingering. So, feeling ashamed at the sight of the ill-concealed envy in my companions' faces as they rose to bid me farewell, I said *"Kwa heri!"* all around, and left abruptly, leaving much unsaid that I should have liked my old comrades to understand. They were a pathetic group standing at the head of the cement stairway, just out of the glaring sun, looking after me with brooding expressions.

The guard was mounting as I entered the barrack square. The *askaris* were rigidly at attention. The order "Fix!" was snapped, and the polished steel flashed overhead in the sunlight. I slipped into the shadows of the long veranda, skirting the square, intending to make the gateway and pass, observed only by the quarter-guard.

"Bay'nets!"

The weapons rattled briskly; the soldiers snapped rigidly back to attention and awaited the next shouted order. It was a pretty sight, and I felt a little glow for having done my share in training them. At this moment the native Sergeant-major, James, spied me out of the corner of his all-seeing eye. He turned sharply in my direction, saluted, and shouted across the parade-ground:

"Kwa heri, effendi! Farewell, excellency!"

Instantly every non-commissioned officer forgot his command and called to me, *"Kwa heri! Kwa heri, bwana!"*

The officer of the guard tried to check the break sharply; I called to them to stand; but it was too late. The *askaris* held their alignment instinctively, but the N. C. O.'s came trotting across the square, while the *askaris* shouted messages of farewell and good luck, and the white officer in command, yielding tactfully, saluted me from his position, grinning broadly. My old comrades, black but true, my children who had shared many strange vicissitudes with me, pressed about, seizing my hands, asking Allah to travel with me and bring me back again. I

talked to them, bade *"Kwa heri"* to them all, with a word for those who would never stand on parade again, and passed out. But at the gate, Sergeant Juma bin Kombo, stupid, gentle, doggedly courageous Juma, turned out the guard, gave me the general salute, and almost wept over my hands.

I climbed into the car, with the white corporal in charge looking at me curiously, and rolled away in a cloud of dust, yet wrapped in glory! . . .

By evening I found myself leaning over the shoreward rail of a listing, limping, war-worn trooper, one of a heterogeneous mob of madmen who maintained their composure under a mask of cynical amusement. Homeward bound! The sick, the inefficient, the ambitious,—broken, battered, burned, with bare legs and much-patched khaki,—some were destined to continue the exhausting fight in the bush southward in Portuguese East Africa, some were on their way to France and happy at the change, some hoped to recuperate in the Union, and a few were bound for England on leave.

All this I knew, for the job of adjutant had been wished upon me. While I was busy

chivvying a suitable Sergeant-major to share the burden of my woes, all Africa was dumped upon the decks and in the holds, all Africa and its household furniture. Yelling, singing, cursing, with bugles blowing, winches roaring, and whistles piping shrilly, laughing, grunting, a torrent of black and white and yellow came up out of barges, over the sides, and spread about the ship.

At midnight we clanked out of harbour.

The exhausted mob simmered into silence. Order settled over the ship; and the sentries took their posts with their habitual expressions of stoical indifference and internal bitterness.

My work done, I crept on deck apologetically, and hid myself in a dark corner from which I could see the shore fading with the waning moon. Here calmness came over me, and I thought with a tinge of melancholy of the friends I had left stewing and simmering in the thankless tropics; regrets formed in my heart, memories crowded about me, faces appeared in the darkness. Suddenly there were voices at my side, and I found myself surrounded by old friends of the bush, bound for Durban, in South Africa.

Our greetings were simple but profane. . . .

We left the bottle-necked and bloody Port-of-Peace (Dar-es-Salaam) over our stern; we raised and passed the scarred and pestilential slopes of Lindi, twinkling prettily above its opalescent waters, like a courtesan covering its venal nature with a smirk; we came to Mozambique, gleaming like a crusted gem upon the blue waters; and we ran into a bit of scrub-lined beach called Lombo, where several dhows were brought alongside into which two companies of black troops with their boyish white officers tumbled.

The blacks poured over the side, grinning and chanting, while the open dhows took them to the thin line of beach, whence they plunged straight into the bush and disappeared. That is my last impression of the Coast—the black troops clambering down our rusty sides, leaping into the mild surf of a tropic shore, disappearing into the bush to fight, and the white boys in command turning at the last moment to wave farewell, torn between the dignity of their command, the uncertainty of the inscrutable future, the reluctance of parting, and the necessity for haste, calling back faintly to us:

"*Kwa heri,* you lucky beggars! *Kwa heri!*"

The old ship clanked seaward again and swung southward, where stood the gates of civilisation and the Cape of Good Hope.